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CASTLES IN SPAIN
AND OTHER ENCHANTMENTS

CASTLES IN SPAIN

AND OTHER ENCHANTMENTS

SPANISH LEGENDS AND ROMANCES

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

BERTHA L. GUNTERMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY

MAHLON BLAINE

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NEW YORK

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GUNTERMAN

CASTLES IN SPAIN

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FOREWORD

SPAIN is the promised land in the search for the unusual and untried in scene and romance. In accord with the glamor of the countryside, the old, old towns, the stern mountains and the sea, are the legends and traditions of the many peoples that have made their homes in Spain; legends which even today, a thousand years later, are retold in remote sections.

The Iberian Peninsula has been the home of many races. Long, long ago Phœnician and Greek traders, roving the Mediterranean, conquered the early inhabitants of the southern lands. Later came the power of Rome, followed by the Visigoths as allies, and in 711 the Arab invasions. The languages and traditions of Celtic, Roman, Germanic, Arabic, Jewish, and Moorish civilizations were welded into a whole as the currents of peoples crossed and recrossed the country.

Spain has a treasure trove of poetic romance almost unknown to English-speaking people. Rich in color, with variety of mood and sentiment, the legends are as dignified and courteous as are the people.

Poetic traditions of the Moors live on in the popular literature and in spite of the wars against them, they often appear to advantage in the tales. Memories of the Visigoths persist in some, and there are a great many humorous tales of the peasants filled with the very essence of the land.

It is hoped that the stories in this book, which takes its name from Castile, Land of Castles, with their chivalry and their magic, having no trace of meanness or vulgarity will bring the color and spirit of Spanish romance to our boys and girls.

From Mrs. M. T. B. Middlemore's *Spanish Legendary Tales* came "The Golden Pitcher," "Silver Magic" ("The Silver Spectre"), "Juanillo" and "The Branch of Almond Blossom."

From *Wonder Tales of Ancient Spain,* by Bernard Henderson and C. Calvert, published in 1924 in London by Philip Allan & Co., and in 1926 in New York by Frederick A. Stokes & Co., to whom grateful acknowledgment had been made, came "The Magician's Castle in the Sea" ("Enchanted Castle"), "Don Fernan and the Orange Princess" ("Orange Palace") and "The Treasure of Cardona."

From *Patrañas,* by Rachel H. Busk, published in

London in 1870 by Griffith & Farran, the following were selected: "The Ill-Tempered Princess," "The Sunbeam Sprites" ("What Ana Saw in the Sunbeam"), "Issy-Ben-Aran," "Juanillo" ("Simple Johnny and the Spellbound Princess," which was combined with one from Mrs. Middlemore's *Spanish Legendary Tales*), "Carlo Magno and the Giant," "How Blanca Became Gentle" ("Blanca the Haughty"), "The Magic Portrait" ("Turin and Floreta"), "The Gift of the Fishes" ("The First Tunny Fishing"), "Ballads and Boots" ("The Ballad Maker and the Book Maker") and "The Black Charger" ("The Black Charger of Hernando").

In my research to rediscover the sources of the stories for the reissue of *Castles in Spain and Other Enchantments,* I was hindered by the disappearance of a portion of my file, and the loss—presumably to vandals—of the books in the New York and Brooklyn public libraries I had used there. I am grateful to the Library of Congress and to the Boston Public Library for help in this search.

B. L. G.

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THE GOLDEN PITCHER

THE province of Soria is, next to that of Granada, most famous in Spain for picturesque legends. It is one of the smallest and most arid provinces of the Peninsula, and the climate is the coldest imaginable in the sunny south. Chains of picturesque mountains encircle deep valleys.

In certain parts the vegetation is strong and rich, with here and there great stretches of pine and oak forest. In other parts lie immense pasture grounds, formerly overspread by flocks of sheep. But the greater part of the country shows nothing but bare mountains covered with snow for most of the year.

Huge masses of granite tower above on each side of the pathway; here and there deep ravines and cas-

cades supply the springs, in which the water is supposed to be extraordinarily good. The children living near these springs are employed to carry the water for household use because there is a saying among the country people that those little ones who are best and purest will one day come upon a hidden Treasure in the mountain.

Carmenita was the daughter of Miguel Todega, a well-to-do farmer of Soria; her mother had died when she was born. Miguel Todega had married, to please himself, a kind and good woman, but so poor that he had disappointed his ambitious old mother. Miguel's mother died soon after her daughter-in-law, and Carmenita was brought up by an aunt who disliked her for she not only resembled her gentle mother in mind and spirit, but also in face and figure.

One would have thought that a little baby like that would have softened a heart even of stone. But Juana Todega had no heart, and she said she had no time for sentimentality. She had worked hard in her youth, and she intended that Carmenita should do the same. She was a grasping, mischievous, hard-featured woman, with a bad temper and a sharp tongue, and all little Carmenita's mistakes were harshly punished.

If Miguel Todega had been much at home he would have seen how his child was ill-treated, but he was constantly absent on business, and Carmenita never complained. She adored her father, who loved her passionately, not only because she was his only daughter, but more because she resembled so much his beloved Carmen, the love of his youth, whom he had lost.

The little girl obeyed her aunt and did her work well; but she sometimes looked so weary and pitiful that it was plain her tasks were beyond her strength. But as she never murmured nor showed any temper, people thought that all was well in that household.

Every morning and evening the aunt sent Carmenita with two heavy copper jars to a spring about half a mile from the house. There a large black mountain reared its huge mass behind the little spring in the valley, which was fed by the cascades and mountain torrents. The mountain was called by the peasants *El Diablo* because it was so dark and forbidding.

The curious cap El Diablo wore whenever a storm was coming on and the strange, uncanny noises constantly heard near it after dark made almost everyone fear to go to this spring after nightfall. But Juana

Todega scorned the superstitious idea and insisted that little Carmenita go to the spring for water.

And though the child was sometimes awed by the grandeur and loneliness of the nearby mountains, she preferred them to staying at home to be scolded and beaten by her aunt.

Carmenita was a great favorite with the other children of the village, and when sometimes she had a little leisure from her dreary tasks, she was always as welcome as the flowers. But there were days when her aunt was unusually severe, and unable to bear the misery heaped upon her, Carmenita would take her bit of knitting and retire to the spring of El Diablo to think over her troubles, and calm her wounded spirit.

She had often heard the curious story of hidden Treasure in the mountains around the Soria, but she never thought much about finding it, because she felt sure that she was not good enough for such fortune.

Her father's homecoming was always a great delight to Carmenita, for besides the pleasure of being with him, Juana Todega was then more merciful to her. The aunt knew from experience how angry Miguel could be if he were roused, and she did not dare scold

or mistreat his daughter before his very eyes. So Carmenita always had a respite from her aunt's tongue and evil temper while her father remained at home.

And so the years passed until Carmenita was seventeen. She was very like her mother, and sometimes her father sighed sadly as he looked at her. Graceful and slender with sweet, deep, gray eyes and a fresh, clear voice, she made many a man's heart turn within him, as she passed on her way to El Diablo with her water-jars, and answered all greeting with her sunny smile and a pleasant word.

It was St. John's Eve, and there was to be a dance on the village green at the close of day. Carmenita danced well, with a step as light as a fairy's; and all the youths of the neighborhood vied with one another in securing her as a partner. She enjoyed fête-days, when she was free from drudgery, and could unbend in enjoyment and delight, sure that her aunt would not be near with her usual scolding and fault-finding.

Doña Juana did not approve of anything like holiday-making. In her day, she used to say, no one thought of dancing and frolicking about like lambs and goats. When she was young, a quiet walk and

mass in the morning, and a few friends to chat with in the evening, was all the fête that was necessary for a young, well-conducted girl.

So she always refused to accompany Carmenita to these little merry-makings, but sent her in care of a neighbor, an elderly and respectable peasant woman, with daughters of her own. The neighbor was nothing loath, for her son Carlos was much taken with Carmenita's charms, and everyone said that they would make a match of it. In truth they were a handsome pair, and no one said anything but good of either of them. Therefore old Doña Ursula considered Carmenita as another daughter, and was, if possible, prouder of her than of her own girls.

On this particular St. John's Eve, Carmenita dressed herself with special care. This was the last fête before her father returned, when her bethrothal to Carlos would be celebrated. She knew that she should be with Carlos there, and she felt pride in making herself as pretty as she could, knowing that he would be so proud of her. Just as she was ready to start for Doña Ursula's house, Aunt Juana called to her, and said:

"We have not a drop of water in the house. It is

not yet dark, and there will be plenty of time to go for the water and return, as there will be no dancing for an hour or more."

Carmenita could scarcely keep back the tears as she listened to her aunt's words.

"Is it absolutely necessary for me to go, Aunt Juana?" she said. "I have put on my best clothes, and I shall get them wet at the spring."

"You never have been splashed before, and if you are careful you need not be now," was Juana's answer. "But have the water we must; for it is hot weather."

"For once could you not get it yourself?" pleaded Carmenita. "Carlos will be waiting for me at the Plaza."

Whereupon Juana burst out in a torrent of abuse. For a moment Carmenita stood speechless, as though she had been stunned. From childhood she had been accustomed to her aunt's unseemly language, and she did not mind so much the words she used. But the disappointment was very great, almost more than she could bear. Her eyes filled with tears, and she kept them from brimming over only by sheer force of will.

Without another word she took up the water-jars

and started to the spring. Doña Ursula lived at the other end of the village from her, so that she could not stop and tell her that she would be late. But she hoped, if she hurried, to reach the Plaza in time to keep her appointment with Carlos.

But the hours slipped by, and Carmenita did not return. Doña Ursula and her daughters waited until the daylight faded away, and the stars came out one by one. But still no Carmenita. At last they could wait no longer, and went on to the Plaza, thinking that perhaps she would be there. But she was nowhere to be seen, and Carlos wandered about sadly searching among the many groups of peasants who had come for the dancing.

At first he was angry thinking that Carmenita had deceived him; but as the evening faded into night he became alarmed, and went to Miguel Todega's house in the hope of finding her. But there instead he found Juana, frightened nearly out of her wits and walking up and down the kitchen, wringing her hands and tearing her hair.

"Oh, Carlos, I cannot find her!" cried she, when she saw him standing in the doorway. "I was cruel and cross, and, although she begged to go to the dance in

the Plaza, I sent her to fetch water at El Diablo. She went without a murmur, although I know that she thought me hard.

"When an hour had passed and she did not return, I was fearful of what I had done, and went to look for her. Even on bright days as you know, El Diablo is not a cheerful place, and the loneliness and desolation along the road is awful. When I got to the spring, I found the jars beside it on the brink, but no Carmenita. I called and called and walked up and down, shrieking her name with all my might. No one could I see, and not a sound did I hear.

"Then all of a sudden I heard the tramp of horses' feet, and looking in the direction of the sound I saw a procession of horses mounted by still, pale men, who turned their heads neither to the right nor the left, but continued straight along in a stately march on the high-road. They wore curious, twisted handkerchiefs on their heads, and were not dressed like anyone I ever saw before. They did not see me, for I was hidden behind a rock.

"After they had passed, I called and called to Carmenita, but she did not answer so I came home again. If those ghostly-looking men have seen her, no one

knows what her fate may be. And it is all my fault. What shall I say to Miguel when he returns?—I, who have been the cause of harm to Carmenita!"

And she sobbed and cried and wrung her hands as if no one were present.

Carlos had listened to Juana's long speech with wonderment. It was the longest he had ever heard her make, for she was singularly silent with her neighbors. But when she mentioned the procession of ghostly people she had seen, his cheek turned pale and he staggered into a chair. He remembered that this was the Eve of St. John, the night when all Moors, wherever buried, rise from their resting-places and go to do homage to their king in Granada. What if they had taken Carmenita along with them?

For some time he stared at Juana in silence, but at last his anger overcame him, and he overwhelmed her with reproaches.

"Accursed woman!" he cried, "you have been the torment and slave-driver of my poor girl. All her life you have made her miserable when her father was not near to see how you treated her. And now, on this night, when you knew, as all Spaniards do know, that the spirits of the dead are free to go about

the earth as on the night of All Hallowe'en, you forced her to go to the spring of El Diablo because you grudged her innocent pleasure, in which you can take no part. If anything happens to Carmenita, I shall hold you responsible, and shall tell everyone that you are to blame for her death."

With these words he rushed out of the house, leaving Juana pale as a ghost, wringing her hands and speechless with terror.

Carlos made his way towards the spring of El Diablo. The moon was sailing through an unclouded sky. Every rock and tuft of grass was as clearly seen as if it were noontide. He looked along the road anxiously to see whether his beloved Carmenita was in sight; but not a soul could be seen along the bright, straight, dusty highway.

When he reached the spring he could see by the moonlight the water-jars which she had brought, filled to the very brim, and standing just where she had placed them ready to take home. In vain he wandered about searching for her in the defiles and paths of the mountain and calling her name. Echo alone answered him. No one appeared, and he could find no trace of his beloved Carmenita.

He searched for some hours near the dreadful mountain, and heard the tramping of horses' feet and groans all about him; but as he could see nothing, he returned home. On his way, however, he stopped and told Juana Todega of what he had heard, and of his ill-success. She seemed to be almost a mad creature and sprang at him when he entered, caught him by the wrist and shoulder and shook him, her eyes glaring at him like a she-bear deprived of her young.

"Well, have you found her? Where is she?" she cried. And when he made no answer, she shook him again. "Speak!" she shrieked. "Have you found her, or is she dead? Speak!"

Carlos was so weak from anxiety and misery that he could only shake his head, yet his expression was so fierce and angry that involuntarily Juana let go her hold of him. Frightened she shrank back into the farthest corner of the room. But in less time than it takes to tell it, he had lifted the latch of the door and was gone.

Meanwhile Carmenita was in no danger, although she had missed the fête, and had caused all this alarm to her aunt and to her lover.

She had gone as usual to the spring of El Diablo, had

filled her jars, and was preparing to return home, when she heard the sound of horses' feet. Looking up she saw a long procession of horses with riders dressed in curious costumes and trappings. They rode in solemn and stately dignity.

For a few minutes she was astonished, and looked on in childlike delight. But as the procession came near her and passed her, she suddenly felt cold and paralyzed with fear. Why, she knew not, and could not understand, but she trembled and her teeth chattered although it was a warm June evening.

But after the procession had passed she prepared to take up her jars and start for home, when she felt a hand laid on her arm. Turning round she saw a beautiful woman, with a lovely, fair face and golden hair, and the most enchanting blue eyes that she had ever beheld. The woman was very pale, and stood looking earnestly at her for several minutes after their eyes met, then at last she said in a low, sweet voice:

"I have been looking for you for a long time. Will you come and help me in a very serious matter? It will not take you long, but I have waited years for you. To you the few minutes will be nothing, but to me they will be eternity."

Carmenita was much disturbed in her mind when she heard these words, and thought to herself:

"I am fated not to go to the Plaza and dance with Carlos tonight. But if I can help this poor soul, who has waited so long for me, I have not the heart to refuse."

"Carlos can wait," replied the fair woman, answering her thoughts.

And when Carmenita started at finding her thoughts known to her companion, and turned towards her, she found the beautiful blue eyes fixed upon her, sad with the sadness of death.

"Do not refuse me," said the woman in a faint whisper, "but come with me."

And without a word Carmenita followed her, leaving the water-jars at the spring.

They walked for nearly a mile without a word, the fair woman walking ahead and Carmenita following. Where she was going, or what she was to do when she reached their destination, troubled Carmenita not at all.

She felt that she could be of use to this fair, proud woman, so strange in her manner, who knew all about Carlos, and had assured her that he could wait. That

surely meant that she would be safe, and return to him in a little while. Suddenly her guide turned. The rocks opened at her touch, and she walked into a large cave, black as night.

"Shut your eyes and give me your hand," said the woman, "and rest assured that no harm of any kind shall befall you."

Carmenita felt so sure that her guide would keep her word, that without fear she shut her eyes and put her hand in that of the beautiful woman. The hand was as cold as ice, but the clasp was firm, almost like a vise, and hurt her a little. They seemed to go through several large rooms, and at last her companion stopped short.

"Open your eyes now," she said. "We are in a place where we can speak without being overheard."

Carmenita looked about her, and saw with astonishment that the walls glittered like ice, and that here and there a tinge of gold seemed mixed with it.

"Sit down here near me," said her new friend, "and I will tell you what you can do for me. You can free me from my dreadful bondage. Centuries ago I lived. I am Moorish, and was taken prisoner by the Christians in their wars with the Moors. I learned to love

my master, and cheerfully left my own people for his sake, following him to his country and repudiating my ancestors and religion.

"My father cursed me with his last breath, saying that never should I find rest for my soul till on St. John's Eve some pure maiden should kiss my lips and of her own sweet charity free my unhappy spirit. Are you willing to do this for me?

"Remember that the various forms I shall have to take will terrify you. But if you will stand by me to the end, my spirit will be liberated. Nothing can harm you, if you keep repeating your prayers. But do not for one minute stop praying or be afraid. So many have promised, but have disappointed me hitherto, that I still remain under this accursed spell.

"Take this pitcher in your left hand, hold it tightly, and do not let it go. It will bring you fortune. Do not cease your prayers for one minute, nor be frightened at anything you may hear or see. And, above all, do not answer any question, or cry out, no matter what you may see or hear. My life is in your hands, be faithful!"

Carmenita nodded her head and grasping the curious, dark pitcher in her left hand, began her prayers.

Suddenly her companion changed into a black ape, and sat beside her. Then the cave was filled with other black apes, who chattered and grinned at her and at each other. This lasted for a few minutes; to Carmenita it seemed hours! But she grasped the pitcher tightly in her left hand, and repeated her prayers as earnestly and fervently as she could.

She tried to shut out the grinning, ugly faces, but to her horror she found that she could not close her eyes. She was obliged to see everything that happened.

Suddenly she heard the tramp of horses' feet, but she could see nothing. And every now and then there would be a call of *Mona* (monkey) followed by peals of laughter and shouts of derision. Then for a time everything was quiet, but the apes still grinned and chattered at her.

Suddenly she heard Carlos' voice calling her own name. "Carmenita, Carmenita!" it cried. "Where are you, my love? I am looking for you, and am wild with terror."

She started up eagerly, but still grasping the pitcher in her left hand. In an instant more she would have answered Carlos, but she felt a hand on her arm, and turning saw the piteous and beseeching eyes of the

poor ape sitting beside her. "Carlos can wait!" came into her mind; and she said her prayers out loud so that she might not hear that dear voice calling her in vain.

Again after a time all was still. She looked around and to her horror instead of a monkey's shape sitting beside her, she found that of a demon. And lo! the cave was filled with demons, all dancing and laughing and jeering at her.

"Indeed, I have fallen into strange hands," was the thought that crossed her mind as she continued her prayers. Her tongue seemed tied, but she still managed to articulate, and grasped the pitcher in her left hand all the more tightly. Suddenly the little demon at her side burst into flames, and through the fire Carmenita saw her beautiful guide taking human form again.

"Kiss me on the lips now," whispered a faint voice at her side.

"Gloria in excelsis Deo!" cried Carmenita, as she stooped forward, and in spite of the flames she kissed the poor creature who had wandered so long under a curse. The words echoed through the cave. A sudden darkness came over Carmenita, sleep overpowered her.

When she awoke, she was lying by the spring of El Diablo, her two water-jars by her side. Grasped in her left hand was a Golden Pitcher, of antique shape and exquisite Oriental workmanship.

The dawn was breaking, and the birds were beginning their morning song, when Carmenita turned her face homewards. On the road she met Carlos, dishevelled and frantic. She smiled at him, but at first he could hardly believe his eyes. Then he caught her in his arms. He kissed her, and laughed, and cried by turns.

"O, Carmenita, where have you been? The angels have been merciful and sent you back to me, for they knew that I should die without shriving if you were not with me to make me as pure and good as yourself."

Carmenita then told him all that had happened. When she showed him the Golden Pitcher, lo! it was full of gold coins. In his eagerness he put his hand into the pitcher to grasp the money, and brought out pebbles! But when Carmenita put hers inside, she drew out a handful of gold pieces.

"Ah!" cried Carlos, "only the pure in heart can touch it and keep it bright. I have learned my lesson!" And he kissed Carmenita more tenderly and

reverently than ever before, knowing that he had won a rare treasure for his wife.

She, dear child, wondered but said nothing. On reaching home she found her Aunt Juana in great distress of mind, wringing her hands and tearing her hair, rocking herself from side to side, wondering how she should dare to face Miguel and tell him that Carmenita was lost to them forever. There was great rejoicing, as may be imagined, when Carlos led Carmenita into the house.

In her own mind Juana Todega made splendid resolutions that she would never be unkind or cross again. The pitcher was placed in a niche where everyone could see it. Of course the whole village crowded to behold this wonderful vessel. And everyone with all his heart said that no one deserved such good fortune as did Carmenita.

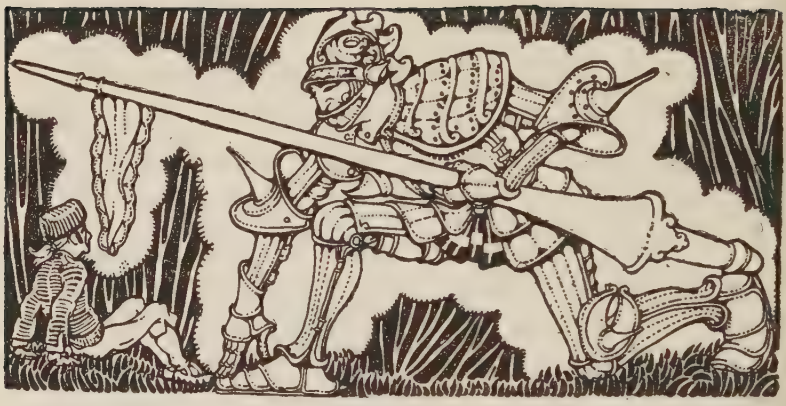
Miguel's return home was still delayed. All went on in the usual way, and the adventure of El Diablo gradually became an old story. Carmenita took her water-jars to the spring every day, and went through her usual drudgery.

One day, when Carmenita was out at El Diablo, evil entered into Juana's heart. She was all alone in the

house, and she thought no one would know what she was doing. She did not know the secret of the pitcher, but had noticed that whenever Carmenita wanted money she put her hand in it and drew out what she wanted. So, tempted, she went to the pitcher, which suddenly looked dull in color, and put in her hand.

But she drew it out very quickly with a loud cry, and found her hand covered with red ants, which had bit and stung her sharply before she could drown them in the pail of water. For days she went about with her hand bound up. It was swollen to twice its usual size. But she was warned by this experience, and never tampered with Carmenita's Golden Pitcher again.

In the course of time Miguel returned to his home and a few weeks later Carmenita and her faithful Carlos were married. They went to Barcelona to live, and with gold from the Moor's gift Carlos bought large silk mills there. One of the most treasured of their possessions was the Golden Pitcher, which continued to reward Carmenita with gold whenever she was in need of it.



SILVER MAGIC

FROM the days of the Phœnicians there were silver mines known in Spain; and as centuries went on, some were exhausted, but others were found to take their place. Some, as we all know, still remain. The hope of finding the precious metal, and of suddenly becoming rich, fired the imagination of the people, and they repeated legends of gnomes and dwarfs who helped dim-sighted mortals to find the hidden treasures.

In one of the mountainous districts where silver abounded, but where it had not yet been discovered, there lived a poor muleteer, named Pablo Fornarete. He was employed by a man who had made a large fortune by breeding a fine strain of mules. Pablo's

work was to herd these mules across the plains and sell them in Madrid, or across the mountains into France. Although his master was rich, and the journeys were long and sometimes very dangerous as well as fatiguing, Pablo was paid a mere pittance; just enough to keep body and soul together.

As he travelled peacefully along the high-roads, he occasionally met rich señores riding fine blood-horses, with embroidered trappings and all the outward signs of wealth. Simple-minded Pablo used sometimes to wonder why the *Dear Señor* made some so very rich, while others remained so very poor, though they worked hard all their lives to keep skin and bone together.

But it never occurred to him to be in the least jealous of these rich people. Only he could not help wishing that he had a little more in his pocket. For with just a little more he could marry his dear Rosita, who had been waiting for him down there in Andalusia.

When these tempting thoughts and delusive wishes crossed his mind, good, honest Pablo would sigh and show his teeth, light his pipe, and beat his mules into trotting a little faster along the road. But he had nothing bad in him, and gradually he would become

contented again, merely saying, "It is not the will of the Domine Dios. Paciencia!"

Some of the stretches of country that he had to traverse were so long that often he was unable to reach any kind of shelter for the night. At those times he used to lie down in the fields with his mules and sleep with one eye open, watching that none of his master's property was stolen.

In the summer it was very pleasant to lie out in the open air, with the stars above him, watching the fireflies as they sparkled and flitted in the brushwood or over the wild flowers, which grew freely everywhere on the plain. But in the winter it was quite a different matter.

The wind blew bleak and cold. He would wrap himself up in his cloak and lie as near his mules as possible that their heat might keep him warm. The stars used to blink at him, he thought, to encourage him; but often they and the moon seemed cold and unkind, and he never wasted much time in looking at them in winter. He was anxious to get as much sleep as he could before starting again in the cold, bleak dawn.

One summer night Pablo stopped for rest in a valley at the foot of a chain of curiously shaped and rugged

mountains. It was a lovely night, and the valley was filled with the sweet scent of flowers. The sky was unclouded, and the moon sailed in queen-like fashion through the vast space which belonged to her. The entire valley lay bathed in silver light, and the fireflies were not visible in the universal brightness.

Pablo saw that his mules were comfortably nibbling at their pasture preparatory to resting for the night, before he stretched himself near them, and rolling a cigarette began to smoke. He could not sleep so early on such a night, and as he smoked his thoughts became more active.

His mind travelled to Andalusia, where Rosita lived. He wondered what she was doing at that moment while he was dreaming in the open air. Then he wondered when he would ever earn enough to marry her, and thought what a nice wife she would be, and how she would bring sunshine with her wherever she went, and make his small means seem twice as much. At last, in the midst of his castles in Andalusia he fell sound asleep.

When he awoke, the moon had nearly set, and the valley was only half so bright as when he went to sleep. He looked towards the chain of mountains at the end

of the valley, and lo! down their rugged sides bright silvery streams appeared to be flowing. Pablo could not believe his eyes, and rubbed them to be sure that he was quite awake. But when he looked again, there were still to be seen the bright, silvery ridges on the mountain, running as lava does on the sides of Mount Vesuvius during an eruption. And on the top of the mountain appeared the figure of a man in shining armor, with lance and spear, preparing to descend into the valley.

Awe-struck, Pablo gazed at the whole scene, and bathed his eyes with the dew lying on the bushes all around him. But still he saw the same thing. After a time, however, fatigue overcame him, and he again slept soundly.

Suddenly he heard a voice, almost in his ears, saying in a whisper:

"Do not forget the spot where you saw me. It means fortune for you, and the power of making your dear Rosita happy. I am the Genie of the Silver Mines, and appear only at certain seasons of the year. Do not forget me, for I may prove to be your best friend."

Pablo awoke in a very disturbed and miserable state of mind. He longed to go straight to those distant

mountains and see whether or not they contained silver. But the dawn was breaking and he had a long way to trudge with the mules before they could reach any shelter for the next night.

He gazed wonderingly at the particular mountain on which he had seen the streams of molten silver. But the mountain told no tales. It reared its proud head, gray and stern-looking in the dawn, and gave no sign that anything unusual had happened in the night. So Pablo was forced to be content with the memory of what he had seen, and started off with his mules at a brisk pace.

He met friends on the road; other muleteers who were going home again after a fair day's sale and, peasant-like, had stopped for gossip. With great enjoyment he thus picked up bits of knowledge of his friends' doings. But all the time he thought over the extraordinary scene that he had witnessed, and remembered that curious low whisper in his ears: *Do not forget the spot where you saw me. It means fortune for you, and the power of making your dear Rosita happy for life.*

These words were a running musical accompaniment to everything that he did or said. Even the heels

of the mules seemed to keep time with them. They nearly maddened him—those everlasting cadences; for although he racked his brains to see how he might be benefited by the Silver Genie; he could see no way by which to become rich.

The Genie himself had said that he appeared only at certain times of the year. Probably he should, therefor, never see his *best friend* again, and he was not at all certain in his own mind that he should know the exact peak where he had seen the silver lava.

His thoughts became very melancholy as he continued his long and tedious journey. Once arrived at Pau, however, he had no time for speculation or dreaming. He was so busy in selling his mules at a good price that it was only when he was ready to go home with a newly purchased pack-mule, laden with necessaries and French articles, that he again remembered his curious experience with the Silver Genie.

He stopped as usual in the same valley to rest and sleep, and was just unburdening his new mule to let her graze about and lie down, when he saw a tall, rather handsome man coming towards him, dressed in a long gray garment. He carried a pilgrim's staff in his hand, and seemed to be very weary and footsore.

"My brother," he said, addressing Pablo, "can you help me to get up that mountain in front of us? Your mule is still fresh, and in any case cannot be so tired as I am. I wish to visit a hermit brother who lives half-way up the mountain. I will reward you well if you will only consent to let me use your mule."

Pablo resisted for a long time the tempting inducements which the tired traveller offered him. But when he discovered after a little more parley that the particular mountain which the pilgrim wished to climb was the one on which he had seen the streams of silver lava, he consented to lend the mule to the stranger, on condition that he, Pablo, should accompany him. This was readily agreed to. The pack was hidden away in the bushes in case of robbers, and then the pilgrim mounted on the mule started for the mountain, with Pablo trudging patiently behind.

When they had climbed half-way up the mountain-side, the stranger dismounted, and throwing the reins to Pablo, said:

"Wait here a while for me. Should I not return by dawn, tarry no longer, for you will know then that I shall not need either the mule or you any more."

He then climbed farther up the mountain, and turn-

ing round a sharp angle, disappeared from Pablo's sight. For a time the pack-mule nibbled here and there wherever a scrap of green cropped up. But finding this amusement rather a losing game than otherwise, it went quietly off to sleep.

Pablo entertained himself by exploring the mountain and trying to knock off bits of rock with his boot, hoping to find some small nuggets of silver. But the bits of rock which he knocked off were very much like other rocks that he had seen before, and he sat down, disappointed and angry, to await the return of the stranger.

Suddenly it occurred to him that the pilgrim had given him no payment, although he had promised him ample reward. If he returned, all would be well; but if he did not, Pablo should have gained nothing except needless fatigue for the sake of a man whom he had never seen before.

This did not improve Pablo's temper, and he started off in the direction which the stranger had taken, hoping to find him and square accounts at once. But he searched in vain. No one was to be seen. After screaming and shouting till he was tired, weariness

overcame him, and stretching himself out on the ground he fell sound asleep.

When Pablo awoke the day was just breaking, and no one was in sight. He again began to shout and call, but with no better results than on the evening before. Very angry was he as he made his way down the mountain to where his mule was tied, cursing and swearing and vowing that never again would he put himself out for any stranger, were he the angel Gabriel himself.

As he placed the pack upon the mule, he thought the saddle-bags felt extraordinarily heavy, and putting in his hand he found them filled with large pieces of rock similar to those which he had knocked off the mountain the night before. At first, in his rage at being deceived, he was inclined to throw them all away; but he suddenly remembered the silver streams he had seen flowing down the mountain-side and the words of the Silver Genie. They were soothing and comforting to him, and quickly replacing the heavy lumps in the saddle-bags, he started for his master's house.

There he told his master what he had seen and heard, and showed him the curious pieces of rock which had

so enraged him. The quick eye of the master caught sight of little threads of white sifting in tiny veins all through the rock, which had escaped the glance of his servant. He took some of the rocks from Pablo, and went with them to a friend who was skilled in ores.

He at once saw that there was money to be made out of it, and asked where these pieces of rock had been found. But Pablo's master could not tell anything about it. Reluctantly he confessed that his muleteer had picked them up somewhere on the road. He had hoped to enrich himself at Pablo's expense, and would have done so had he not foolishly forgotten to ask where they had been found.

Pablo was at once sent for. He saw that something important had happened, and that it had to do with the rocks. He refused to tell where he had found them unless he were rewarded for his information. A sum of money was given to him at once, and more promised him if he would conduct his master and his friends to the mountain itself.

Pablo did what he agreed to do. The mountain was found to contain a silver mine of great richness. Pablo was handsomely paid, and married his dear Rosita, and they went to live in Malaga, where by

careful saving and hard work they became very rich.

But Pablo never ceased to attribute his success to the pilgrim stranger; and would relate with much delight his adventures with the Silver Genie.

THE ILL-TEMPERED PRINCESS

ONCE upon a time there was a poor young knight, who went out into the world, to seek adventures and do knightly deeds. One day, he met a man standing at the entrance of a long, narrow tunnel in a rock. He was blowing through it, his cheeks puffed out like two ripe pomegranates.

The knight called out, "Halloa! fellow, what do you there?"

"Disturb me not, your worship, for with my breath I am turning five hundred and thirty-two mills," answered the man.

"Then who are you?" asked the knight.

And the man made answer, "I am Blowo, son of Blowon, the good blower."

Then the knight asked, "Will you come with me to seek fortune?"

And the man answered, "Your worship is not more ready to ask than I to accept, for I am tired enough of blowing."

And he gave one more good, strong blow, enough to set the mills twirling for a long time, and walked on behind the knight.

A little farther along they came upon a man toiling and moiling up the hillside, upon his back he had a load of a hundred and thirty-two hundred-weight.

To him the knight called out, "Halloa! man, you carry more than does a wagon with two yoke of oxen! Who are you?"

And the man answered, "I am Porto, son of Porton, the strong porter."

Then asked the knight, "Will you come out with me to seek fortune?"

And the man said, "Your worship is not more ready to ask than I to accept, for I am weary of this burden."

So he laid the weight by the road-side and walked along behind the knight.

A little farther on they came to a long stretch where the road was very straight, and by the side a man walked

up and down, twisting a rope. To him the knight cried out:

"Halloa! fellow, what do you there? And who are you?"

And the man made answer, "I am Ropo, son of Ropon, the cunning rope-maker, and I make ropes which none can break."

Then said the knight, "Will you come with me to seek fortune?"

And the man made answer, "Your worship is not more ready to ask than I to accept, for I am weary of twisting this rope."

So he left his rope there by the road-side, and walked along behind the knight.

A little farther on they came upon a man crouched down by the way-side.

To him the knight called out, "Halloa! fellow, what do you there? And who are you?"

And the man made answer, "I am Listeno, son of Listenon, the ready listener."

So the knight said, "What are you listening for?"

And the man made answer, "Blowo has left off turning the mills, and I am listening for the wind to come down from the mountains of Burgos."

"Fellow! the mountains of Burgos are a hundred leagues off."

"What does that signify, if my hearing reaches as far?"

Then said the knight to him also, "Will you come along with me and seek fortune?"

And the man made answer, "Your worship is not more ready to ask than I to accept, for I am weary of straining my ears."

So he set up three flags, that all the country might know the wind would be there in three days, and walked along behind the knight.

For three days they travelled on until they came in sight of a magnificent castle, extending half a mile every way over the top of a mountain, but desolate and all in ruins. The way up to it was overgrown with interlacing brambles and briars, so that they could scarcely pass. Then to make harder their way, a heavy storm came on, which would soon have wet them through and through, but Blowo cried out:

"Never fear, your worship; for I will soon clear the air."

So he blew a mighty blast, and sent all the big

thunder-clouds travelling back to the Sierra; and the four travellers went on toiling up the brake.

When they came up to the castle, they found there was no way to enter, no door or opening of any kind. Porto, Ropo, Listeno, and Blowo wanted to give up the attempt, and go on farther; but the knight was curious about the castle and would not hear of abandoning the adventure.

"If your worship is so determined," said Porto, "I'll open a way for you."

So he broke off a huge piece of rock as big as two men, and, standing a hundred yards off, threw it against the wall. The wall trembled and clattered with a noise that could be heard a hundred miles off, but it was held together by a stronger than human power, and all Porto's great strength could not effect an entrance.

"Let us go away from here, Master," pleaded Ropo, "this is no place for us. There is something wrong about this place; and the blessing of God is not here."

"No," replied the knight, "first we will learn all about it. There may be work here for us."

So they walked round and round the walls to see

where they might find an opening but all to no purpose. By and by Listeno exclaimed:

"I hear some one crying."

They all listened, but could hear nothing. But Listeno made them follow him in the direction whence came the sound till at last they were near enough for the others also to hear.

They went on following it till they came to the mouth of a great well all grown over with climbing-plants. They cleared these away, but the hole looked so black and deep, and seemed to go down to the centre of the earth. Up the shaft there came the sound of a woman's wailing, so loud and pitiful. Then were they all moved to pity, and anxious to run to the relief of the distressed one; but they had no means of reaching the bottom of the well. Then Ropo came forward, and said:

"We will gather five thousand bundles of esparto, and palmito grass, and all five shall set to work to make a long rope; and with that we will reach the bottom."

No sooner said than done. They gathered five thousand bundles of esparto, and palmito grass, and set to work under Ropo's directions and twisted away at the

rope. Now and then they tied a fragment of rock to the end and let it down, to see if it reached the bottom. Thus they worked for five years.

At last the stone they had tied to the rope splashed in the water, and when they again carefully let it down it sounded on the rock, and they found only a few feet of the rope was wet, for the water was not deep. Then Listeno put his ear against the top and told them it was not standing water, but that a brook ran through, along the bottom of a cave.

As they twisted the rope, they talked about the great deeds each would do; and each had a guess as to what they should find at the bottom of the well. They all thought they should find a treasure, and Porto said he would take it up on his shoulders and carry it home for them, though it should weigh as much as all the lead of the Sierra Almagrera.

But when the rope was finished, and it was a question of who should first go down, not one of the knight's followers, though they had been boasting so loudly before, would venture into the well. So the knight laughed, and said he was not afraid. He lashed one end of the rope tightly to a rock. The four follow-

ers undertook to play it out steadily, and down descended the knight into the black, gloomy depth.

For three days and three nights he went on steadily descending, and at last he reached the water. It was not more than breast high, so he waded through it for several yards till he came to a place where the bank widened sufficiently for him to get out and walk along it. Then he came to some trees, and past the trees was an open space illumined by a lurid light which shone from a deeper cave.

On a sloping bank, covered with shining grass and strange flowers, lay a beautiful Princess dressed in white and decked with shining jewels. As she lay, she moaned and cried and prayed for deliverance. The knight hastened towards her, and drew his sword to cut the bonds which confined her. But at that instant a fierce demon which he had not observed before, started up from where it lay coiled at the mouth of the cave.

"Not so fast, Caballero!" he cried. "The Princess is mine, you will have to fight me before you can touch her."

The knight disregarded the challenge and continued

his way towards the Princess. But the air grew cold all around him, and though he could see no hindrance, he found he could not move.

"Ha! ha!" roared the demon, "my fine Caballero, you will have to do with me at last!"

"Who are you?" shouted the baffled knight, "and what is this beautiful Princess to you?"

"I must answer the knight who asks that question," answered the demon, "or it is little you should learn from me! Know, then, that this Princess was the only daughter of King Euric, to whom belonged all the country as far as eye can see. She would have succeeded to his kingdom, but her temper was so violent, no one could bear with her. Upon the least contradiction she would order a subject to be executed. Her arbitrary conduct was continually involving the kingdom in discontent and trouble. Her father, who tenderly loved her, used to coax her and use every endeavor to soften her, but to no avail. At last, one day she provoked him so sorely that in his anger he exclaimed, *Go to the horned one!*

"When I heard myself called, I hastened to seize her. But, notwithstanding all my speed, before I could arrive he had revoked the curse, and so I was tricked

out of her. This happened several times, but each time fatherly fondness was quicker than my utmost haste. At last, a day came when she excited him so greatly, that he said again, *Go to the horned one!* But before he could recall the words he had fallen down lifeless. So now she is mine, and mine she must remain unless some knight will win her in combat with me, marry her, and restore her to her castle and her kingdom."

"That will I!" said the knight stoutly; for though after what he had heard, he feared the Princess' violent temper, chivalry bound him to use his best endeavors to deliver her.

Accordingly he drew his sword, and called to the demon to come on.

"Remember one thing," said the demon, "should you win her, yours she is for ever. I take her back no more."

Meantime, Listeno, at the top of the well, had been reporting to his companions all that he heard going on below. Their curiosity getting the better of their fears, they let themselves down by the rope, and all four arrived in time to witness the terrible contest.

Never had such a combat been seen in this world as that between the knight and the demon. At last

the knight cut off one of the demon's ears. No tongue could describe the demon's rage at finding his ear in possession of a mortal.

"Give me my ear!" he cried in tones so sharp that they almost stunned Listeno.

"Never," replied the knight, "or at least not without a heavy ransom. In the first place instantly reinstate the Princess in her castle, with all her power."

The demon stamped and raged, but the knight was firm. The demon was ashamed to go home without his ear, so he thought it best to comply.

The Princess was placed on her throne, and the castle restored to its strength. The garrison manned the ramparts, and servants again appeared in the halls. Then amid great rejoicings and festivities the knight married the Princess and his four followers were given places of trust and consequence in the palace.

The demon often came to beg for his ear, but the knight felt that at some time or other he might have need of him, so he would not lose his hold over him by giving it to him yet.

For a time all went well enough, but little by little the Princess forgot her years of adversity and the debt she owed the knight. She grew more and more wil-

"Give me my ear," he cried

ful, and before a year was out she had become so violent again, that he grew weary of his life, and declared he could no longer endure the continual turmoil. His remonstrance and coaxing were alike unheeded, it was in vain that he tried her father's remedy, for the demon had sworn never to take her back.

In this strait Porto reminded him of the ear he held in hostage, adding, "I will take it upon myself to deliver you of her." So putting into his pocket the bottle of brine in which the ear was kept, he swung the Princess over his shoulder; and all her struggling was useless against "the son of the strong porter."

Thus laden he went to seek out the demon.

"You are to take back this Princess, she is fit only for your company," he said, when he had found him.

"Not I!" answered the demon, grinning. "I told your master when he would have her, he must take her for good and all."

"Do you know this ear?" then asked Porto, showing him the bottle.

The demon clutched at it.

"Not so fast!" cried Porto. "If you would have it, take back the Princess along with it. This is my master's condition."

Glad to get back his ear on any condition, the demon accepted the bargain, but the Princess who could not keep her temper never found another knight to deliver her.

THE SUNBEAM SPRITES

WHEN one lies in a thyme-bed and looks through the sunbeams, little Sprites can be seen. Some are preparing the beautiful colors to paint the flowers, the insects, and the clouds, and to dye the tree-leaves green and gild the old walls. Others are teaching the insects to hum, the birds to sing, and the little children to smile.

If a Sunbeam plays upon a baby when it is put into the cradle for the first, the very first time, the little Sprites will always look after that child. They never forget it, and even when it is grown to be a man or a woman they still continue their care.

Once upon a time a baby was born in a little cottage, such a poor little cottage, that there were no shutters of any kind at its windows. In summer the sun came

in, and there was no way to soften the hot glare, unless the poor mother could pin up an old dress; but often she had none besides the one she wore. It happened that when this baby was born, the little Sprites basking in the sunbeams that were streaming in, kissed the baby and said:

"Dear little Ana, we shall never leave you. So long as you are good we shall take care of you."

A very little while afterwards, the baby's father died, and you might have said the Sprites had forgotten her; but it was not so. They still watched over her. Her mother took care of her, and Ana was too small to know what other children had, so she wanted nothing.

Ana did not know that her poor mother had to work very hard to earn money for food and that even when singing her to sleep she was worried about the future. Ana's little face was pressed close and warm against her mother's breast, and a flower or a fruit, which the Sprites had painted for her, was enough to complete her happiness.

Before Ana was two years old, her mother died. But the Sprites had not forgotten her. When her mother's sister, Tia Trinidad, came to the funeral, the Sprites had painted Ana's cheeks with such fresh, clear

tints, and lighted up her baby face with such a bright, sweet smile that she took Ana home and brought her up as her own child, and was a mother to her.

The Sprites continued to play with Ana and when she was asleep they danced on her bed, and said, "Dear little Ana, we shall never leave you. Only be good, and so long as you are good we shall take care of you."

Meantime, Ana grew up. She worked in the garden, kept the house in order, and carried water from the fountain. She did everything to help Tia Trinidad. She was very good and obedient. Her chief pleasure was lying on the thyme-bed in the sunshine, because then the Sprites painted such pretty dreams for her.

But Tia Trinidad was growing old, and except for her there was no one to take care of Ana. Though she would not talk about it for fear of frightening Ana, who was always bright and gay, she worried continually about the future. Things looked very dark, but the Sprites had not forgotten Ana as you shall see.

Tia Trinidad earned her living by serving travellers who stopped at the little inn in the village. But few people came that way, and often many days passed

without her earning a *'chavo*. One day, however, a traveller arrived who had returned from the Indies with a great fortune. He said he had roamed long over the world, and seen enough of great cities. Now he meant to settle himself in some quiet village, and the only thing he wanted in this world was a kind, good, and industrious wife who would make him happy.

"There I can help you!" broke in Tia Trinidad, who had been seized with a most diligent dusting-fit while the traveller was talking to the village Cura about his plans. She had not missed a word.

"Can you?" asked the traveller, not at all displeased by her boldness.

"That I can," said Tia Trinidad, earnestly; "and no girl in Madrid can match her; the Cura will bear me out!"

"What—you mean Ana, I suppose?" said the Cura, somewhat embarrassed between his desire to speak the truth and his fear of crushing what seemed to him presumptuous ideas of this poor woman. "Yes, Ana is a good girl." Then he paused to think what he could say in her favor. "She is young, pretty, and lively, and notable altogether, but—"

"Well," interrupted the traveller, hastily, "out with

it! You have named the very qualities which I seek in a wife. Speak, man!"

"Well, I mean only that she is a little—what shall I say?—a little homely for your wife—"

"Homely, is it? Oh! if that is all, we shall not quarrel. I do not want one of your fine ladies who thinks only of her clothes! Come, my good woman, ask your young friend if I may see her tomorrow."

Too overjoyed to answer, Tia Trinidad ran home so fast that you could not have told of what her gown was made as she passed. When she reached there, out of breath, she told Ana that next morning she must dress herself in her best, for a visitor was coming.

Ana, though seventeen, still did whatever she was told with alacrity, and now fulfilled the directions given her with great exactness and success. She never thought of asking who the visitor was, or what had brought him.

The traveller called next morning, and found the room so clean and bright with the sunbeams playing through the muslin blinds upon the snow-white curtains, and the brightly-tinted flowers, which the Sprites had specially painted, tastefully arranged. Ana herself looking so neat, and with no thought of display in her

head, delighted him. His air of satisfaction convinced Tia Trinidad that all would be well.

But, as he was leaving, he asked Tia Trinidad if Ana could make lace. And Tia Trinidad, who thought her niece such a pearl that there was nothing she could not do, without thinking, answered "Yes." There had been however too much work with the garden and the housework all her young life for Ana to have had time for such an occupation. She could take a turn, indeed, at her aunt's spinning wheel; but she had never attempted to make lace.

"Why did you tell the traveller that I could make lace, Tia Trinidad?" she exclaimed, for she could not bear an untruth about the least matter.

"Well, in my surprise, I did not know what I was saying," replied the good aunt. "It seemed as if I should have given a false impression of you who are so industrious, if I had said you could not do any thing expected of you."

"Then why did you not say that I could spin, and scour, and dig?" asked Ana.

"Dig, and scour, and spin, indeed! Fine recommendation that for his purpose!" cried the aunt.

But before Ana could ask what this purpose was,

a messenger brought in three bobbins of fine black silk, with word for Ana to make a piece of lace, as a proof of her skill.

"Oh, aunt, what shall we do? What shall we do?" sobbed Ana who could not endure to be thought a deceiver.

"Do not worry, child," returned the aunt. "Something or other will turn up. There is nothing so easy as making lace, after all, and three bobbins are gone like winking. You must do it, for your fate depends upon it."

Ana went to bed that night and cried and cried, until she fell asleep. But very early in the morning, very early indeed, the sunbeams woke her—you see the Sprites never lost sight of her! And three beautiful Sprites—the three who had the most care of her—came floating down the Sunbeam.

Without saying a word, they took up the bobbins of silk, and as if they had known all about it, for they had brought with them everything needed for making lace. And rattling the bobbins about, they had soon finished a beautiful mantilla, with designs of flowers, and birds, and everything you can think of. Then the Sprites threw the mantilla on the bed, and disappeared

before Ana had time to recover from her surprise.

When the stranger called next day, and saw this extraordinary proof of Ana's industry and skill, he could hardly believe his eyes, and was more pleased than the day before.

"Did I not tell you that she was a jewel?" whispered the old woman.

"I begin to think you did not exaggerate," answered the traveller.

And then, turning to Ana, he asked her if she was as perfect in household duties as in accomplishments; whether, for instance, she understood cooking.

"Of course!—" interposed the aunt, before Ana had time to reply, for she knew the good girl would have answered with the strict truth.

In the evening, the messenger came again, followed by two porters, each carrying baskets of provisions. These they set down, with the message that Ana was to make a famous *olla podrida,* and the traveller would come for dinner the next day.

Ana's tears fell fast as Tia Trinidad stood gazing at the basket. Never had such provisions stood within sight of her hearth! But Ana did not know what to do with all that choice material. No help could be

expected from her aunt, to whose cuisine even a piece of bacon was a rare delicacy.

Ana went to bed that night as sad as on the night before, and she kept saying to herself, "Suppose the *Señor* should think it is I who have been deceiving him!"

But the Sprites did not forget her. Very early the next morning—very early!—they came in on the Sunbeam, as bright and as beautiful as before. In a trice they had laid the fire in the stove and blown the charcoal into a fine red glow. Then one took down the large ollas from the shelf, and filled them with water at the well. And while another was busy plucking the fowls, the third washed and prepared the vegetables. The vegetables were soon put on in one olla with the bacon; and then the fowls, the ham, the sausages, the tripe, and the rolls of lean meat nicely larded and stuffed, set to stew in another. All seasoned with the greatest care and delicacy.

The whole morning Ana watched the Sprites. And though Tia Trinidad saw nothing but the Sunbeam playing about the kitchen, Ana saw the Sprites, as they carefully skimmed the pots, added to the liquor or the flavoring, made up or slackened the fire. Then, an hour before dinner-time the contents of the two ollas

were mingled with care, and once more set to simmer; while with herbs, bread crumbs, garlic, pimento, and parsley, certain *albondigas gruesas* were being made ready, and fried in sparkling oil to a fine golden hue, ready to drop into the olla the moment before serving up.

The traveller came, faithful to his appointment, and the delicious odors of the olla met him directly that he entered the garden-gate, overpowering the perfume of the carnations on the window-sills. Proudly Tia Trinidad bore in the lordly dish, for she knew that not even in the King's palace was a more perfect stew served.

The traveller dined with undisguised satisfaction. He declared it was the very best of cooking. Nothing was wanting, of nothing was there too much, everything was in its due proportion and that proved the handiwork of a true artist in cooking.

"As you understand so well how to prepare this homely dish," said he to Ana, as he took his leave, "I am sure you will be equally successful with confections. You must make me a *turron,* tomorrow."

Ana, struck dumb with perplexity, was vainly striving to find words to explain how little part she had

taken in the cooking of the *olla podrida*. But before she could speak, the traveller had plucked a carnation for her hair, and, raising his hand in affectionate farewell, had taken his departure.

Tia Trinidad busied herself with putting by the remains of the abundant meal. There was meat enough to last her frugal needs a week, and more, and some to spare for a poor neighbor besides.

While she schemed and portioned, Ana, torn by conflicting thoughts, stood still, with the carnation in her hand. She gazed after the stranger as he disappeared among the trees, wondering why she did not have the courage to run after him and explain all.

She stood leaning against the window, and was still gazing, perplexed, hours afterwards, when the same messenger who had visited her on the two evenings before, again appeared, with a load of almonds and filberts, pine-kernels and walnuts, honey and eggs. Ana took the things from him with a heavy heart, for she was much too humble and simple to expect that the Sprites could be so kind as to help her again. And she went to bed in as great distress as on the preceding nights.

Nevertheless, early in the morning—very early in

the morning—very early, very soon after sunrise, that is, as soon as the sun was up high enough for his beams to get in at her window—in came the three Sprites, and without saying a word, set to work, just as they had done the day before. Then begun such a wonderful stirring, and pounding, and mixing, that Ana lost all fear that the turron would not be perfect.

The Sprites had not half finished their mixing, when all of a sudden there was a soft buzzing sound, like the humming of bees, but all in beautiful melody. Then Ana saw that the Sunbeam was full of Sprites of every hue like living flowers. They were the genii of the flowers, and they wore the very forms of the flowers, their bright petals making so many wings. Each came and poured its own perfumed nectar into the confection, giving it a flavor such as no turron had ever possessed before.

"We have done all these things for you," said the Sprites, when they had completed their task; "now will you do one thing for us?"

"Oh, whatever you like! Only tell me what I can do!" answered Ana eagerly.

"Well, it is this. We know three girls, who are very poor and sick. They are so deformed and so ugly that

they live in the hospital, and are never asked anywhere. It would give them much pleasure to come to your wedding-fête. They will be no ornament to it, yet will you ask them to come?"

"Oh, yes; to be sure, the poor things!" answered Ana, "that is, if ever I am married. But who would marry a poor, penniless orphan-girl, who can do nothing? More likely I, too, must some day go to the hospital."

"Oh, no; you are to be married very soon, and to that handsome traveller who has been here so often."

"What! I am to marry that kind and handsome señor!" cried Ana in surprise. But a moment after, hiding her face in her hands, she said sadly:

"No; that can never be. I dread even to meet him again, because we have deceived him. Oh, it was very wrong; I would not have done it for the world but I had no time to speak. If he wants to marry me, it is because he thinks I am clever; and when he finds I can do nothing he will go away, and that is not the worst. When he finds he has been deceived, oh, how he will despise me!"

And she sobbed again.

"No, it is not because you are clever," answered the Sprites. "We have helped you because you are good.

If you have not learned more, it is because you have had no opportunity. You have always been industrious and as to deceiving the señor, that was never your will and intention. So cheer up! We will make it all right. Only do not forget to invite to the feast the three poor girls from the hospital!"

Then the Sprites floated away on the sunbeam.

"Be sure I shall not forget them, poor things!" Ana cried after them.

The next day the stranger came again; and having tasted the exquisite turron, which seemed indeed to have been perfumed by no ordinary means, he told Tia Trinidad that he wished to marry her niece at once.

There was nothing Tia Trinidad desired more. She had inquired about him, and found that he was a worthy man, as well as abundantly supplied with this world's goods. So all was speedily arranged.

To her surprise, when she came to announce her good fortune to her niece, and to arrange preliminaries with her, she found that Ana was anything but pleased, and burst into tears.

"Why, child! Whatever is the matter with you?" she exclaimed. "You cannot mean you do not like

him? I am sure he has spoken kindly and fondly to you. And what is more, he has spoken kindly and fondly of you to me; which shows his esteem is not mere flattery."

"It is just that which makes me so wretched," sobbed Ana.

"What, wretched to think a good man loves you!"

"No, aunt, no; but to think that we have deceived him who is so good and so kind. When he finds that I can do none of the clever things, what will he think of me? How can I meet him now? Will he ever respect me again?" and she sobbed harder than ever.

"Nonsense, child, do not cry so!" cried Tia Trinidad. "Do as I bid you, and all will come right in the end."

Ana, used to obeying and trusting in great measure also to the promises of the Sunbeam Sprites, prepared to do her aunt's bidding, though with somewhat mixed feelings.

When the wedding day was fixed, and all the preparations made, Ana did not forget to go out early to the thyme-bed and ask the Sprites of the Sunbeam, how she should find the three poor girls, the three cripples of the hospital.

"Leave that to us," said the Sprites. "You have done your part in remembering them. We will take care they have the invitation. Only give us the token by which they may be sure of being admitted."

"A red and white carnation will suffice," answered Ana, and a cloud overshadowed the sunbeam.

The wedding day came, and the fêtes, and the cripples. A pitiable sight they were indeed. Young they were still; but their distorted forms only made their youth a cause for greater compassion.

The back of one was curved over so that her chin touched her waist, and her arms were so short they were no longer than the fins of a fish. The arms of the second were so swollen that each was the size of her whole body, and you could scarcely tell which was which; and on her forehead was a swelling like the horn of a rhinoceros. The skin of the third was shrivelled and seamed with scars, and her eyes were red, and stood out from her head like those of a lobster.

"Ana!" exclaimed the bridegroom, as the poor girls approached, "how did these scarecrows get in? They are almost enough to cast an evil eye on our happiness."

"Say not so, beloved," replied Ana, "they are three poor girls who might have been as happy as you and

I, but that misfortune overtook them. Their life is sad enough, shall we not try to make them glad for once, on our own happy day?"

"Sweet child, you are right, and I was too hasty," answered the bridegroom, "but how did you come to know them?"

"Some one who was very kind to me seemed to take an interest in them too, and asked me to invite them, that they might have at least one bright day."

"Then, if that is the case, they have my heartiest welcome. I had rather have them here than the great duchesses of the land."

And with that he sent the friend who was seating the guests to put the girls in the best places, nearest to the bride and himself.

Nevertheless, he could not get over his curiosity. He wanted to know why they were deformed in such an extraordinary manner. When the conversation was sufficiently general, he went up to the first, and after an exchange of the ordinary compliments, inquired in the politest tones:

"May I ask, dear friend, why it is your back is so bent, and your arms are so very short?"

And while he waited in great perturbation, lest he

should have offended or hurt the poor thing, she answered cheerfully enough:

"By all means, I am not at all ashamed of it. I used to be a famous hand at making lace, and my stepmother, finding she could make a lot of money out of my work, kept me at it so continually that from bending over it so much my back could never come straight again; and my arms from continually twisting the bobbins were quite worn away."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the bridegroom, abruptly, for his alarm got the better of his courtesy. Then he sprang to the side of his bride, and exacted from her a promise that she would never make any lace from that day forward.

Ana gave the promise willingly enough; and, his composure somewhat restored, before long her husband's curiosity led him to the side of the second "scarecrow" guest, to ask her why her arms were so very thick and why she had such a bump on her forehead.

"Because," she answered, in a tone which seemed to show she was pleased to have the opportunity to explain the circumstance, "because I used to be a rare hand at making *almendarado* and *turrones* of every

kind, and from continually pounding and pounding the almonds and nuts, my arms grew thick as you see. As I often knocked my forehead with the big pestle we used, I got this ugly bump."

With greater trepidation than before, he darted to Ana's side, and taking her hand in his, obtained her promise never again to make any confections.

Encouraged by the good-nature with which his curiosity had been met, he soon found himself by the side of the third cripple, asking her why her eyes were so red and goggled, and her skin so scarred.

"Because I was a famous cook." was the answer. "I married very young, and my husband was particular about his dinner. Never could I be away from the cooking-stove, and that injured my eyes. But worse than that, one day I had a frying-pan full of boiling oil in my hand, and I was just going to drop in the chops, when bang went a pane of glass! Some one had frightened the cat, and in he bounded through the window, scattering the glass right and left. The noise gave me such a start, that I upset the frying-pan over the heated stove, the oil flared up in my face, and burnt me all over as you see."

Without retaining sufficient self-command to say the

few words of sympathy and consolation which would not have failed him another time, he hastened back to Ana. Then and there he insisted that she promise him never again to touch a frying-pan or an olla.

And now Ana understood why the Sprites had asked her to invite the three cripples to her wedding-fête; and she was rewarded for her charity. And you see how the Sprites kept their promise.

ISSY-BEN-ARAN

ISSY-BEN-ARAN was a venerable muleteer, well known in all the towns of Granada for his worth and integrity—an elder and a father among his tribe.

One day, as he was journeying over a wild and sequestered track of the Sierra Nevada, he heard a cry of pain proceeding from the road-side. The good old man immediately turned back to render help to the unfortunate. He found a young man lying among the sharp points of an aloe hedge, groaning as if at the last gasp.

"What ails thee? Son, speak," said Issy-ben-Aran.

"I was journeying along the road, father, an hour agone, as full of health as you may be, when I was set upon by six robbers, who knocked me off my mule.

Then not satisfied with carrying off all I possessed in the world, they beat me till they thought I was dead, and flung my body into this aloe hedge."

Issy-ben-Aran gave him a draught of water from his own bota and bound his head with linen cloths steeped in fresh water. Then with great strain of his feeble arms he set him on his own beast to carry him at a gentle pace to the nearest town to further care for him.

No sooner was the stranger well mounted, with his feet firmly set in the stirrups, than, drawing himself up with no further appearance of weakness, he dug his heels into the horse's side, and loudly laughing, started off at a rapid gallop.

Issy-ben-Aran, to whom every stone of the road was as well known as the lines upon his right hand, quickly scrambled down the mountain-side, so as to confront the stranger at the turning of the road.

"Hold!" he cried. And the nag, who loved his master well, stood still and for all the stranger's urging refused to move.

"Son! think not I am come to reproach you," said the old man. "If you desire the horse, even take it as a gift. You shall not burden your conscience with a theft on my account."

"Thank you!" scoffed the heartless stranger. "It is fine to make merit of necessity; but I have nothing to do but ride to the nearest town, and sell the brute."

"Beware! and do not do it," said the old man. "The nag of Issy-ben-Aran is known at every market in the kingdom, and any man of all our tribes who frequents them, finding you with him, will reckon you have killed me, and slay you in turn. Even for this have I come to you. Take this scroll to show that you have it of me as a free gift, and so no harm shall befall to you.

"Only one condition I exact. Promise me, that you will tell no man of what has passed between us. Because if it should become known, a man hearing his brother cry out in distress might say, 'This man is feigning, that he may take my horse like the horse of Issy-ben-Aran,' and the man who is really in danger be thus left to perish miserably."

THE MAGICIAN'S CASTLE IN THE SEA

ONE sultry summer evening, in the great days when the sun never set on the glory of Spain, Diego Alvarez, a young soldier fresh from the wars, was approaching Toledo.

Beyond the deep gorge of the Tagus the haughty *Crown of Spain* rose high upon its throne of wall-girt hills. The fiery sunset gold flamed on the massive ramparts, on tall stone houses, convents, churches, and towers, above which, four-square, stood the huge mass of the Alcazar, or castle, a beacon to travellers.

Having but a few reals in his pockets, Alvarez had in two days walked all the way from Madrid. Parched, dusty, and travel-worn, he did not wish to enter the proud city till dusk. He halted, therefore, by

St. Martin's Bridge, and for a while stood looking down at the river meadows, in which a number of women were filling the twilight with chatter and song as they washed linen in the swirling stream.

Not far from him, on a dusty patch near the bridge-head, were rows of booths, surrounded by customers. The stalls were heaped with fans, sweets, cheap jewellery, clothes, and fruit. Colored paper lanterns, already lighted, glowed in the mellow dusk.

Alvarez, thinking to stay his thirst and hunger with fruit, approached a stall kept by a fat, middle-aged Moorish woman of very evil appearance. She offered him figs, but the soldier was disgusted by their wilted condition.

"In Murcia, my native country, we would not feed a hog on such unwholesome fruit!" he said.

Some bystanders laughed. The stall-keeper, roused to fury, shrieked:

"What! Abuse my figs! Thou rag-bag! Thou crow-scarer! Thou roving dust-heap! Thou run-away from the wars; for I warrant you never waited to face an enemy!"

The soldier's scarred face grew dark.

"Things have come to a pretty pass in Spain," he

cried, "when a heathen Moor can so address a Christian! How then! Thou over-ripe fig! Am I forbidden to speak the truth?"

"O liar and son of liars! First-born and delight of the Evil One!" screamed the woman. "Convey thy beggarly rags to safety while there is time, for here comes one who will make you sing another tune! Behold my husband."

She pointed to a very tall, lean Moor, who was pushing his way through the crowd. The fiery Spanish blood flamed up in Diego Alvarez. Not for twenty Moors would he have yielded an inch of ground.

"Faugh!" he sneered contemptuously, folding his arms. "Thinkest thou, old garbage-seller, that I am afraid of yonder stick of liquorice?"

But the Moor seemed to be in no fighting mood. Slinking to the woman's side, he murmured in her ear. Whereupon, hastily picking up their fruit, they departed amid the jeers and threats of the onlookers.

"Well played, Captain!" shouted a man. "Pity more of us do not so deal with these unbelieving dogs; dangerous dogs too, and hatchers of treason if not worse. For, to my mind, they are sorcerers in disguise who poison the people. There have been many deaths

here in Toledo of late, due doubtless to the cankered tumors they sell as figs!"

The soldier, however, disdained to listen. He strode across the bridge, passed under the great gateway, over which the gigantic stone scutcheon caught the last gold of the day, and put up at a humble inn, just inside the second rampart.

Later in the evening, bathed and refreshed, Alvarez strolled out into the sultry, moonlit night, seeking a breath of air. Coolness there was little. The stone houses, huge as castles, and baked all day by the sun, made a furnace of the steep, narrow streets, one half of which lay in velvet shadow gilt by the occasional light of shrines and windows, while the other showed paper-white in the splendor of the full moon. For a time the soldier moved among crowds of people who were taking the air, some seated at their doors, others strolling gravely in groups, silvered by the moonlight, or dimly visible in the deep shadow.

Gradually the streets grew empty, the noise of steps and voices died down. Only the sound of the watchman chanting the hour, and the trill of clear, tenor voices, soaring high above the quick thrum of guitars, disturbed the silence.

It was late when Alvarez reached the Plaza Zocodover, lying straight and narrow between fantastic houses, built in the Moorish style. As he was about to leave it on his way to the inn, he heard the soft thud, thud of *alpargatas,* or rope sandals, in the shadows, out of which a man advanced towards him.

Alvarez put his hand to his sword-hilt, for he recognized the husband of the fruit-seller.

"Do not draw, Caballero," said the Moor; "I come in peace. This evening you and my wife had a quarrel. She is, I fear, ill-mouthed when she is angered; and you are quick of temper. We will cry quits, and let the matter pass. Now to the business which has brought me here. You are, pardon me, evidently ill-provided with money. On my side, I need the services of a resolute man. Look at this bag. In it are one thousand ducats. They are yours, on one condition. A year hence, to the day, at midnight by the cathedral clock, you will meet me beyond the river at the head of St. Martin's Bridge, and assist me in an enterprise that, I will be plain with you, may be dangerous. Further, you must come on foot and unattended. Walk a little way with me, and we will discuss the matter."

Alvarez, not without misgivings, consented, keeping watchfully on his guard. He tried to discover the nature of the service expected, but could get no information. In the meantime, he kept dipping his hand into the bag the Moor had handed to him, fingering the soft, smooth gold pieces. In the end, the soldier accepted the offer; and at once, with a cold smile, the Moor vanished among the shadows.

Alvarez, half regretting his folly, yet cheered by the bag of gold, returned to a feverish sleep at the inn. On the next day he moved into the best house of entertainment in Toledo. He purchased fine clothes, a good horse, hired a man-servant, and became known as a gentleman of wealth and position.

In this way he continued for a twelvemonth, traveling at his ease and in luxury. Then the year being out and the money nearly exhausted, like a man of honor, but very unwillingly, he stood about midnight at the head of St. Martin's Bridge on the further bank of the Tagus, opposite Toledo.

The sky was clear and bright with moonlight, under which the splendid city showed like a carving of ivory and ebony. As the first stroke of twelve boomed across the ramparts, Alvarez heard muffled steps in the dust,

and saw the Moor approach, leading two saddled horses.

"I knew you would act honorably," he said, "and it is well for you that you have kept faith with me. I trust your year has been a pleasant one. The memory of it will lighten your future troubles. You can ride, I presume? Good! Mount the gray horse! And now, friend, for your guidance, let me tell you that we shall travel through the air. Do not be alarmed, however; sit the animal easily; avoid looking earthwards, and you will not fall."

No sooner were they both mounted than the horses soared high in the moonlight, and rushed eastwards at a pace that made the air sing past the soldier's ears in a steady stream of sound. Below them, marble pale, and veined by shadows in the metallic lustre of the moon, stretched the plains of New Castile, bounded to north and south by shadowy shapes of mountain. Toledo, a chequer of white and black, dwindled behind them as they sped through the cold brilliance.

Hour after hour they travelled, following their shadows which the moonlight cast ahead of them, like ants scurrying across the gray levels. Presently the

sky in front began to whiten, a line of fire quivering round the rim of the eastern heavens, and before long the first flash of the rising sun seared their eyes.

Far below, on their right hand, they saw the dark masses of the palm-groves of Elche. Before them, silvered by marshes, and studded with pale *atalayas,* or watch-towers, spread the yellow levels of the Alicante shore, outlined by a glittering sea. Over this they were soon speeding so swiftly that the tawny coast of Africa, backed by the snow-fretted amethyst of the Atlas range, lifted out of the southern sky.

When they neared the barren strands of Morocco, bordered with foam, the Moor whistled and the horses descended slowly. They alighted on the sands of a deep bay, in the middle of which stood a rock bearing a castle. Jagged cliffs of sandstone, ruddy in the light of the sunrise, enclosed the deep blue inlet.

The soldier was so stiff from cold and the long riding that he could hardly lift himself from the saddle. As he did so, he observed that the heaving chests and flanks of the horses were bespattered with foam, just as they would have been from galloping on land.

The Moor led the animals behind a boulder, and

uttered a few words in an unknown language which seemed to calm the creatures. Out of the saddle-bags he took bread, cheese, olives, dates and wine.

"Eat and drink, Don Diego," he said, with an evil smile. "More especially, drink. The wine is good, and you will require all your courage for the task before you."

"This is like a banquet at the foot of the gallows," thought Alvarez. Nevertheless, being a hardy soul, and with hunger sharpened by the night journey, he ate heartily.

When they had finished, the Moor took out a bundle of herbs. These he laid on a stone and kindled them by means of a flint and steel. He then began to mutter incantations over the rising smoke, which appeared to take the shape of a shadowy human figure. As soon as the herbs had burnt to ashes, the Moor said:

"Heed you, Sir Presumptuous! My wife and I are full-blooded Moors, sworn enemies to your people, who dispossessed our ancestors. In revenge we spread sorrow and evil among you. Even now many a one in Toledo is knocking at the gate of Death, having eaten of the figs that, as you suspected, were unwholesome. Truly your insolence would have laid you low by now,

but I had other uses for you, by means of which I shall inflict exquisite punishment on you, and at the same time, increase my wealth. Yonder Castle belongs to a powerful Magician, my enemy, whose riches shame the treasuries of Kings. These incantations have confirmed my supposition that he is, at this moment, away on a journey. Help me to remove some of the treasure, and your life shall be spared. Refuse, and, by my arts, you are a dead man. What is your choice?"

Alvarez laughed fiercely. "The choice is not extensive. I was a fool to have any dealings with one of your vile race, and must pay the fool's price. What do you want of me?"

"Curb your insolence," answered the Magician, "and to horse again at once. There is no time to lose!"

They remounted, and rode down to the sea, sapphire blue in its golden frame of sands. Out of the waters, about a mile distant, the Castle shimmered pale in the heated, tremulous air. To the soldier's astonishment the horses walked on the waves, as though these were of solid glass. Within a few minutes they had reached the islet.

The Magician took four small sacks from the saddle-bags, and gave them to Alvarez, saying: "There

is no entrance to this place. I shall raise you to the top of the tower above us. You will descend the stairs to the room immediately below, which contains many chests packed with silver, gold and gems. Fill the sacks with jewels only, and throw them down to me. Now go!"

He touched the soldier with a sprig of yew, and at once the young man floated like a bubble to the top of the tower. He groped his way down the stairs to a room, dimly lighted by slits in the thick walls. All around were coffers filled with silver, gold, pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other jewels, of great size and lustre. With these Alvarez hastily filled the sacks, and dropped them over the battlements to the Moor, into whose hands they floated as gently as thistledown.

The Moor slung them across the saddle of the gray horse, then mounted the other, calling out:

"Farewell, Good Slave! Find your own way home. There is no lack of wealth to pay for the journey!"

He spurred his horse, and galloped off across the sea. On reaching shore, he halted for a moment. A column of smoke wavered blue in the sunshine, after which Alvarez saw the two horses speeding, swallow-

wise, north-west through the air, in the direction of Spain.

The young man watched them, mad with fury.

"Hear me, San Isidoro!" he cried at last, clenching his hands. "Help me to confound the malice of that enemy of God, and I vow to return thanks to you yearly, in your own house, at Leon!"

"And now," he thought, "let me consider. I am in a prison, and the other Magician may return at any moment. It would be well to examine this Castle and try to discover some way of escape. This tower is full one hundred feet high, and so smooth that except by means of a rope or by magic it is not possible to reach the ground. I must examine the building below."

He drew his sword and descended the stairs. Under the treasure-chamber was another room full of strange instruments, and of loathsome objects, such as mummies and dried lizards and snakes, to be used in unholy rites. The stairs led down into the Castle, where he found a number of apartments beautifully appointed in the Moorish style. All seemed quite deserted.

Suddenly Alvarez heard a rush of wings, and steps sounded in the corridors. He had scarcely time to slip behind some hangings in a great hall, when a man

entered it. From his hiding-place Alvarez watched him.

The newcomer was a tall, grizzled Moor, with the cold eyes of a serpent. He wore a blue robe, on which were embroidered red signs of unknown meaning. Almost at the same moment the hangings that concealed the Spaniard were drawn aside, and the Magician stood looking on him with eyes hard as crystal. The two faced each other in silence. Then the Moor sat down on a divan, whence, without speaking, he continued to eye the Spaniard, who had stepped out into the room, disdaining further concealment.

At last the Moor asked in Spanish: "Who are you? And how came you here?"

Alvarez, giving himself up for lost, told him all.

After a dreadful pause, the Magician said:

"Never did a man's life hang on a more slender thread. It is well you did not lay hands on your sword! Look yonder!"

He pointed to an inlaid wooden stool in a corner. A blinding flash darted from his hand. The stool flamed, and sank into a handful of ashes.

The Spaniard set his face. No heathen should ever say that Diego Alvarez had cringed before him. An-

other silence followed, then the Magician spoke:

"Because my quarrel is chiefly with him who employed you, I will spare your life. But you shall remain here till death, as my servant. Attempt to escape, and the most painful death you can think of will be nothing in comparison with what I shall devise. Go down to the kitchen, where you will find one who will instruct you in your duties."

The offices lay in the foundations of the Castle. In them, Alvarez discovered a very old man. The skin of his face was as crumpled and yellow as that of a stock-fish forgotten on the drying-frame and wisps of thin, white hair hung about his face. This poor creature instructed Alvarez in his duties, and the soldier, being a good-natured fellow, cheerfully helped the old man, so that they soon became friends.

Alvarez learnt with amazement that his companion was a certain Esteban Peral, a Spaniard of Alicante. In his youth, some three hundred years before, he had been captured off Minorca by the men of Barbary, and sold as a slave to the Magician.

Since that time the old man had lived in the Castle, kept alive by magic draughts. Within these walls he expected to die, and often declared that death would be

welcome, for, in spite of strengthening potions, he found life a burden through age and unending drudgery. It was doubtless this knowledge that had induced the Magician to spare Alvarez, whose duties were to sweep and clean the apartments, a task beyond the old man's strength.

Every week food in abundance, and of the richest quality, was conveyed to them by a griffin of hideous appearance, whose blood-thirsty eyes often rested evilly on Alvarez.

Occasionally the Magician entertained others of his kind with banquets. At these times, so said Peral, horrible things were planned, pestilences, wars, famines, and other scourges of mankind; but Peral was not allowed in the banquet chamber after he had brought in the food. Fortunately for himself Peral was a skilful cook, and therefore somewhat of a favorite with his master.

Many months passed, during which Alvarez in vain tried to discover a way of escape. As the Moor had said, there was no entrance to the Castle. The windows were mere slits in the thick masonry. In all the building there was no rope, nor anything out of which a rope could be made. Further, the walls were not

only very high, but also as smooth as an elephant's tusk.

But the pride of the Spaniard revolted against slavery. He was resolved, at any cost, to attempt an escape.

One day, among the keys that were left in charge of Peral, Alvarez noticed one of copper, one of silver, and one of gold. He questioned his companion about them. Peral was much distressed:

"Alas!" he said, "that you should have observed them! I have long endeavored to hide them from you. Do not question me further on the subject. Nothing but misfortune will come of it."

Alvarez pressed him, however, and at last Peral said:

"If you must know, they have been put into my keeping with orders to guard them strictly. I have, however, good reason to believe that the Magician is by no means displeased when any of his captives attempt to use them, so dreadful is the end to which the poor wretches come.

"In the foundations of the Castle are three adjoining rooms, in which are three doors. The copper key opens the door of the first, inhabited by a monster who would at once tear you to pieces. Should you escape

this danger and unlock the door beyond by means of the silver key, your way would be barred by a brass giant wielding an axe in each hand, one stroke of which would cleave you asunder. But, even granting you surmounted this obstacle, and opened the next door which yields to the golden key, you would at once perish by the bite of a poisonous snake within."

"But if I survived this last danger?" asked Alvarez.

"You could not possibly do so," answered Peral. "It is folly to suppose such a thing."

"But if I did," repeated the soldier.

"Then," said Peral, "you would be free. Heaven forbid, however, that you should make the attempt. Three men have ventured to do so during the long years of my service here. And all came to a dreadful end; one in the first, and the others in the second chamber. The Moor once told me that, five centuries ago, a prisoner succeeded in entering the third room. And he, so the Magician related with unholy laughter, died tearing himself to shreds, because of the agony caused by the snake's venom. My dear friend, I entreat you to put the thought from you altogether."

Alvarez was not daunted, and by degrees obtained further information regarding the three rooms. This

he carefully considered, and at last formed a plan which he laid before Peral, asking for his help in the venture.

For a long time the old man refused to listen but as Alvarez declared that he himself was determined to make the attempt, adding that a Spaniard should prefer death to hopeless slavery, more especially under a heathen task-master, Peral consented to help him. They made their preparations with great care and waited for a favorable opportunity.

About two months after, the Magician informed them that he would be absent for a week. He expected then to return in company of the great Prince of the Magicians, with whom he had weighty business forward, and in whose honor a rich banquet should be made ready. He summoned a passing wind, and was wafted away.

When the Moor had vanished in the southern sunblaze, Diego Alvarez went up to the treasure-chamber. Selecting the finest jewels, he filled his pockets, as well as a bag, which he tied to Peral's girdle. They then collected sundry things that Alvarez required to carry out his plan: the three keys; a double-bladed Moorish battle-axe; a thick cloth; a long knife carefully sharp-

ened; and a huge cake, steeped in the strong wine of which there was plenty in the castle, for the Magician loved the good vintages of Spain. Then, lighting a couple of torches, and carrying between them a heavy tub, they went down to the vaults of the Castle. In a corner shone a massive copper door. Opening this with the copper key, Alvarez caught sight of a monstrous creature within. It was covered with thick green scales. Its feet were paws armed with talons, and its neck ended in a crocodile's head.

Hastily flinging in the cake, they slammed and locked the door, which rang and shook as the creature hurled its bulk against it. After a while the noise died down, and they heard a crunching sound, followed by a snoring, full, deep, and regular.

They opened the door, and cautiously looked in. By the light of a torch that the old man carried, they saw the huge brute stretched asleep on the flagstones; its long, leathery neck like the trunk of a palm-tree, barring the threshold. With two powerful strokes of the axe, Alvarez cut through the neck, and streaming blood, the bulky body, larger than that of an elephant, quivered and lay still.

Rolling the tub over the monster they came to a door

of silver. This they opened with the silver key, pushing the tub before them in the opening.

Yellow and white metal flashed in the torchlight, and two enormous axes, wielded by a towering figure of brass, crashed deep into the massive wood of the tub staves. Struggling violently, with clanging joints, the statue tried to lift the weapons for another stroke. But in so doing the axes raised the heavy tub, to which Alvarez daringly clung. Overbalanced by the weight, the figure reeled and crashed forward, shattering itself to pieces on the stone walls of the room.

Instantly Alvarez, with a fierce shout, darted inside, leapt over the ruin and opened the third door, which was cased with plates of gold. By the light of the torch that Peral bravely held aloft in the entrance, they saw on the further side of the room a great snake coiled, ready to spring. The jaws were open, and the forked tongue quivered.

The next instant the creature flashed towards them like a javelin. But Alvarez, as a boy had practised in the bull-ring, and holding his mantle like a *muleta* on his left arm, stepped aside with the skill of a *torero*. The snake, striking the cloak, fell with its head muffled in the heavy folds. The creature straightened as

it tried to withdraw its head for another stroke. In that instant Don Diego's knife glided in between two of the joints of its spine, and the monster sank back, killed by as clean a thrust as ever brought down a bull in the *Plaza*.

Thereupon the Castle was shaken by so loud a thunder-clap that the two men were stunned. A choking, dark mist enveloped them, and they lost consciousness.

When they recovered their senses, it was under a blinding light that scorched their faces. From a cloudless sky the sun poured down fire. The Castle had disappeared, and a roaring noise filled the air. It was the sound of the sea, rushing in a cataract of foam towards the mouth of the bay. The island and the sands about it rocked, heaved, rose violently, and, at last, came to rest, leaving the bottom of the inlet a dry, sloping plain, high above the level of the outer waters.

But what was more singular yet in the old man's place Alvarez saw a vigorous youth, who looked at him with dazed eyes. For some time Peral could not believe he was so changed, but, examining his firm flesh, very different from the shrivelled husk in which his soul had so long been housed, he returned thanks to

Heaven. The spell once broken, his youth had been restored to him without stint.

Together they hastened across the flats, which were already drying, asteam under the fierce sun. On reaching the shore, they sped some distance along the coast, till, finding a cave, they hid themselves to avoid pursuit.

They continued their journey in the dark, for fear of the natives. The next morning, at dawn, they saw, close in shore, a fishing-boat from Malaga, the crew of which had ventured thus far in search of fish. These men readily agreed to take them aboard.

By the grace of San Isidoro they escaped the corsairs, and on the following day landed in Spain. Here by means of the jewels they were able to live handsomely on adjoining estates, holding dear till death the friendship begun in affliction. Neither did they forget to make each year a pilgrimage to Leon, where they gave grateful thanks to San Isidoro for his assistance in their extremity.

JUANILLO

WHEN Ferdinand, King of Spain, with his invincible sword, drove the Moors out of his domain, a certain one of their chiefs was Clotaldo, of high and noble lineage. For his valor in arms he was elected King of the fertile provinces of that part of the East which is called Syria.

King Clotaldo had three beautiful daughters, the most beautiful maidens that had ever been seen. He loved them dearly and decided that they must be won in marriage only by those willing to prove their bravery and worth by some great deed of valor. So he called together all the master masons of his kingdom and at his command they built a Castle, so high that it seemingly reached to heaven.

Then he called together all the magicians of his land and bade them enchant the Castle with their magic. And the magicians enchanted the Castle with all their spells, and sent three magic horses to guard it, so that none unworthy should overcome all the obstacles and enchantments and be able to enter.

Meanwhile the King sent heralds out into all the far countries to proclaim that any noble knight of high degree, fortunate enough to make his way into the Castle, would be given one of the Princesses in marriage. The heralds were to tell of the great beauty of the Princesses and to let all men know the worth of the prize for which they were to contend.

Far and wide travelled the heralds, telling their story in many lands, so that everywhere adventurous and valorous knights and princes, the flower of chivalry, were anxious to try their fortunes in this high enterprise. But not one of them found a way to enter the Magic Castle, and all came back crest-fallen from failure.

At last three brothers, simple knights and poor of estate, but of high and noble lineage and of higher and nobler courage, came to try their luck. No sooner had they heard the heralds in their country of Denmark,

tell of the enchantment and Clotaldo's offer of the hand of one of the Princesses in marriage than they set out to deliver the three most beautiful Princesses from the Magic Tower.

They came first to King Clotaldo and told him their high purpose. Thereupon, the King ordered that they should be given anything they needed to aid them. The two elder brothers asked for mettled horses and shining armor. But Juan, the youngest, said that all he wanted was a wagon with two oxen, and provisions enough for several days, an immeasurably long rope, some strong nails, and a powerful hammer. And to each was given even as he asked.

The two elder brothers confidently mounted their dashing steeds and rode away. In a very short time they arrived at a hill overlooking the Castle, which to their dismay was ten times as high as ever they had imagined. Then too, it had neither doors nor windows. Not the smallest break of any kind could their eyes perceive in the massive walls. They could discover no way to scale the precipice. At last after two days they gave up in despair.

"How can we ever enter a place like this?" asked the eldest brother, looking as foolish as he felt.

"It looks to me like an impossible task," said the second brother.

"I vote that we go back," said the first brother.

"The very best thing that we can do," rejoined the second.

"And the sooner the better," continued the first.

"Here we go then," added the second.

And with that, like chicken-hearted men, they turned their horses round and galloped back by the way they had come. But they had not gone far when they met Juan toiling along in his cart.

"There is no need for you to go to the Castle," said the eldest brother. "We have been there, and find no way to enter."

"We shall see," answered Juan.

"But the task is impossible!" cried the second brother.

"When I set out to do anything, I do not go back with it undone," quietly answered Juan. "There must be some way to liberate the Princesses. But as there is still a considerable distance to travel, I shall first have some dinner. Will you join me?"

The older brothers, who had not had the foresight to bring food for themselves, were very glad to accept the invitation. They all sat down to dinner. Then,

Juan continued his journey by wagon, while the two horsemen started homeward. But suddenly one of them said to the other:

"Suppose we follow and see what our young lad does. Maybe he will succeed. Then, as we are two against one, we may be able to overcome him, and take all the reward for ourselves."

"Well thought!" exclaimed the eldest, heartily.

So they turned their horses' heads again, and followed behind the cart, telling their youngest brother that he might need their services if his daring led him into danger.

Juan had overheard their conversation; but he saw no way of getting rid of his wicked brothers, who were well armed and splendidly mounted. He could but continue his way and trust to his wits afterwards to save him from their evil intentions. As he rode along he measured with his eye the vast height of the Castle and carefully made plans in his head. Arrived at the Castle wall, he bound the nails and hammer in his girdle. For three days he sought a way to scale the wall and at last found a place where he could gain a foothold. Then tying one end of the rope around his arm, he started to climb the wall of the Castle.

The brothers sat on their horses watching him, expecting every minute to see him fall to the ground. But up he went, lithe and steady; up and up with the tenacity of a cat or squirrel, till he had climbed so high that he looked like a little speck. At last he was lost entirely from the sight of the brothers watching below.

Juan had scarcely reached the battlement and stepped upon the terrace when the door opened and three beautiful maidens came out to him. At first he was so dazzled by their exceeding beauty, that he could not speak, but stood gazing at them while the eldest said:

"Who are you, presumptuous youth, who ventures so boldly into the abode of three Princesses? With your life must you pay for this indignity."

"To die at your command, fair ladies, and in your sight, would be joy for me," cried the young knight. "But first have I work to accomplish. This is to free you from the enchantment that holds you in this high tower. Now, tell me what it is that I must do to set you free."

"Since you have courage and are so stout-hearted and well-spoken," answered the fair Princesses. "We

shall tell you of that which you must do, and great shall be your reward. Know you, then, in this Castle are three noble horses. One hair from the tail of each must you take to free us from the enchantment that binds us here. Fierce, and shy of approach are the horses. Nevertheless, fear not, even if they breathe out fire. If you are bold, success is yours!"

Then the young knight went out fearlessly to meet the three enchanted horses. He went from door to door and though they breathed out fire upon him and reared and plunged to trample him to death, yet he managed to take one hair from the tail of each, and thus destroyed the spell which bound the Princesses.

Then he tied the cord round Zuleika, the eldest Princess, and very carefully lowered her gently and safely to the ground below. So he did with Zoraide, the second. But when he would have parted from Fatima, the youngest Princess, she turned and thanked him with gentle words, saying:

"Take this necklace, noble youth. For workmanship and power it has no like on earth. Never part with it. One day it may deliver you from as great a strait as that from which you have delivered us."

Saying this she waved her hand to him, and prepared to descend as had her sisters. As soon as the young knight saw that Fatima had safely reached the ground, he turned to drive the strong nails into the wall and make fast the rope for his own descent. But scarcely was he thus occupied when his wicked brothers, seeing the moment of their advantage had come, gave a violent pull on the rope. Down it came, leaving the youngest brother no means of escape from the Castle.

The brothers then rode away in haste carrying off the Princesses. They rode on and on without stopping till they came to the King.

Clotaldo, seeing his daughters free, never doubted that those who brought them were their true deliverers. Therefore he received them with high honor and favor. And then the two false knights were betrothed to the two elder Princesses. In vain the youngest Princess told the true story of what had happened. Four witnesses were against her: for Zuleika and Zoraide took the part of their husbands. They said that the long imprisonment had turned their young sister's mind. So no one would listen to her. Then the

weddings were celebrated with great rejoicing and a splendid marriage feast was held, but the youngest Princess, weeping, sat apart in her chamber.

Meanwhile the youngest brother was left in terror and dismay on the top of the exceedingly high Tower. He had no means of ever getting away from it, and worst of all, no prospect of ever again seeing his little Princess. He did not care about the others. Fatima alone had thanked him; had taken thought for his future welfare, and presented him with the splendid necklace. He could not give her up!

He took out the necklace and looked at it. It was indeed of curious workmanship. Its bright gems sparkled like rays of hope. He kissed it because it reminded him of the kind little Princess. But he could not see how it was to help him. So at last he wrapped it up, and laid it again in his bosom. But he continued to think of all that had happened, and then he remembered what the sisters had said of the wonderful qualities of the magic horses. At last he began to wonder if they could help him to escape.

To remain where he was would be certain death, and a shameful, cowardly death to boot. He was never wanting in clear thoughts, or fair courage to execute

With One Fearful Bound They Dashed Off the Battlements

them, and a plan which he determined to put into execution now ripened rapidly in his mind.

"If you are bold, success is yours!"

The words rang in his ears, and seemed an omen of good fortune. He went back to the place where he had found the first of the magic horses. There they stood, the three abreast of each other, as if awaiting the word of command from him.

Resolutely the young knight sprang on the back of the middle horse and gathered the floating manes of the three in his hands. They started together, and, with one fearful bound which shattered the Tower to atoms behind them, dashed off the battlements. The wild leap through the air deprived Juan of his senses.

When the young knight came to, he found himself lying on the ground in a wild wood so full of thick trunks of withered trees that daylight hardly penetrated. The three horses stood near and when he rose to his feet they came to him and one of them said:

"Master, if ever you need us to aid you, you have only to blow upon the hairs you have in your keeping, on the gray hair for my gray brother, the white hair for my white brother, and on the black hair for me. If you blow three times we shall all come."

Then suddenly the black horse uttered a wild cry. The three horses spread out their forelegs and disappeared into the air.

Juan walked on for a long time by a lonely path. At last he came to a place where cattle were feeding. He asked the herdsman in what land he was and found that he was on the borders of Clotaldo's kingdom.

"But," said the herdsman, "by your dress and speech, you are not of our people."

"No, friend," replied the young knight. "I am a poor stranger who has come out to seek fortune, but she has reduced me to a sad plight. But I have one favor to ask, will you exchange clothes with me?"

The cattle-herd was pleased at this proposal, and asked no further questions. He arrayed himself in the fine clothes of the knight who in turn found a complete disguise in the peasant's rough clothing of undressed skins.

Then Juan walked on for eight hundred leagues, sustaining life by begging alms on the way. The fatigue and privation and hardship he endured soon altered him so that his brothers would not know him again. That he might further the disguise, he as-

sumed the manners of a half-silly person, so that all the people called him Juanillo, or Silly Johnny.

All this time Clotaldo had been urging his youngest daughter to marry, but Fatima would not even look at any of the princes he named to her. She had determined to marry no one but the young knight, her deliverer. She felt all confidence in his valor and that he would find some means of making his way to her. At last one day, when the King had been urgently trying to persuade her to follow his counsel, she brought out a drawing which she had made of the necklace bestowed on her knight. She told her father that when a man could produce a necklace like it she would consent to be his wife.

The King was very glad to have his daughter's consent on any condition and forthwith set clever draughtsmen to copy the drawing. He sent heralds abroad over the whole earth to proclaim that whoever should make a necklace of the required pattern would be awarded the hand of his daughter in marriage. But the workmanship was so fine and the setting of the jewels so cunningly devised, that no goldsmith on earth could produce it.

Just about this time Juan reached the kingdom and

as all the people were full of excitement about the necklace, the news came to his ears also. When he heard the condition the Princess had made, and remembered that when she gave the necklace to him she had said, "The earth could not produce another," he was beside himself with joy, for he knew that she was waiting for him.

However, not to betray himself too soon, he continued his disguise, and, as if he knew nothing of the matter, asked to see the design. The guards and retainers ordered him away, but the King was a very just man, and said that as there were no exceptions named in his proclamation, anyone who applied must be allowed a fair trial.

"But," he added, when he saw the rough uncouth form of the suitor, "remember fellow, if you fail, your head shall pay the forfeit of your impudence."

Juanillo played his part perfectly and gave his assent with a grin; and a nod of his head to all the efforts to dissuade him. At last they shut him up in a tower, with a furnace and crucible, and much gold and priceless diamonds, emeralds and rubies. Then they locked him in securely, so that he could not run away if he failed to produce the necklace.

At the end of three days, when they came to see what he had done, Juanillo brought out the original necklace. Every one was filled with amazement, because all could see that it was exactly like the design the Princess had drawn.

When Fatima heard the shouts of the people she knew that some one had succeeded in producing the necklace and she came forward to see who it was. In an instant, through all the disguise, she knew her knight again, and turning to the King, said:

"Sire, the conditions are fulfilled; let the marriage take place."

Her father was amazed at her willingness to marry a rough, silly man like Juanillo. He tried to dissuade her, but she would not change her mind, and he could find no excuse to go back on his plighted word. But Clotaldo was so ashamed of the bridegroom that he had the ceremony performed in the quietest way. Then he gave them a little house outside the walls of the town where they might live and no one see or hear anything more of them.

Clotaldo had been very prosperous but the troubles of life were beginning to press upon him. First, he was afflicted with failing eyesight. His physicians

could not understand the malady nor do anything for him. At last he became quite blind. In despair at the loss of his sight, he sent into all countries to call together all the wisest men; but none could help him. One day, however, an ancient man appeared, who said that the only cure for the blindness of the King was water from the spring flowing out of a sharp rock in the mountains of Sclavonia. The journey would be perilous because fierce wild beasts inhabited the surrounding country.

No one had sufficient courage to run the great risk, so the King finally called to him his two elder sons-in-law, and said:

"My sons, as you were so valiant in freeing the Princesses from the Enchanted Castle, doubtless, now you will help me. You will not shrink from the perils of a journey that will be the means of restoring my sight."

The wicked brothers did not dare to show any hesitation. It would have betrayed them. So they set out on the journey, but with heavy hearts, and plotting as they went how they might make excuse for coming back without the water.

But the moment Juanillo heard of the old wise man's advice, he took counsel with his Princess. At her bid-

ding he went out into the wilderness and blew once on the gray hair. Immediately the gray horse stood before him.

"What does my master desire?" asked the charger.

"Water from the magic fountain in Sclavonia, to heal the eyes of the King," answered Juan, and vaulting on its broad back, away he sped like the whirlwind. After passing through ten thousand perils, he filled his flask with water from the fountain which sprang out of the sharp rock in the mountains of Sclavonia. Then he started quickly on his way back.

He had nearly reached home, when he met his two brothers riding out. Doleful they were and in great perplexity. When they saw Juanillo riding along like the wind, they were very curious to know who he was and whence he came. They called to him to stop and tell them. And he answered courteously:

"I have been to fill my flask with water from the fountain in the sharp rocks of the mountains of Sclavonia."

When the wicked brothers heard this, their first impulse was to spring upon him and take the prized flask from him. But when they saw his impetuous horse and reflected that he had come back unscathed from

all the perils of the adventure, they feared to measure their strength against him and therefore assumed a mild tone.

Instead, however, of making up for their past faults, and rejoicing in his success, they still followed their selfish aims. They offered him any bribe he should name if he would but give them the flask of water.

Juanillo gave them the flask, but refused their bribes. He asked as his guerdon the two golden pears which the King had given them. These had grown on a tree which produced but two each year, and none might pluck them but the King.

The bargain was thus settled. Juanillo returned and told the little Princess of his adventures, while the two false brothers exulting bore the flask to the King, boasting of the deed of valor by which they pretended to have won it. They took care to say nothing of Juanillo.

The King recovered his sight and loaded the brothers with rewards and honors. But before long he was stricken with another infirmity. His hearing began gradually to fail. Finding no relief from his physicians, he soon became quite deaf. A proclamation of great reward again attracted the learned to his

court. Among the wise men came once more the old seer who had before given good counsel.

"In the wastes of Albania," said he, "under the shade of the highest mountains, among many wild beasts, there lives a race of lionesses, more fierce than the rest of their kind. If any one will procure the milk of one of these fierce animals without injury to her, that will be the sovereign remedy."

Juanillo had no sooner heard what the old doctor said, than he went out into the wilderness and blowing upon the white hair, called the second of the magic horses. In less time than it takes to tell it, the white horse was there.

"Master, what is your wish?" asked the mighty charger.

"Milk from the lioness of Albania, to heal the ears of the King," answered Juan, and mounting the horse, was off like the wind and soon reached the deserts of Albania. Armed with words of magic the little Princess had taught him, Juanillo went up to a lioness without being seen by her and filled his flask with the magic milk.

Meantime the King had again called his two elder sons-in-law, not doubting that they would also be able

to accomplish this feat since they had acquitted themselves well before. He despatched them to the mountains of Albania. They suspecting that their brother would again accomplish the task, set out with less concern than on the former occasion, but plotting how they should persuade him this time. Nor had they advanced many leagues when they met him on his brave steed coming back at full speed, with the bottle of milk carefully bound in his girdle.

"Good morrow, friend," they cried, as he came near. "Whence ride you, so fast and so early?"

"I have been to the wastes of Albania, to fetch lion's milk to heal the ears of our good King," replied the young brother.

"At what price do you hold it, friend?"

"Nay, this I sell not," replied Juanillo.

"But we have come out to fetch it, and how shall we return to the King without it?"

And they pleaded so well, that Juanillo was fain to give them the flask, but exacting this time the penalty of an ear from each of them.

The condition was hard, but now the game was desperate. If they returned empty-handed, it was an acknowledgment of their former perfidy. After all it

would be much less an injury to lose an ear, than what might have befallen them in the mountains of Albania had they pursued the journey, or from the anger of the King and the populace had they remained at home. So they combed locks of hair over their ears to conceal their loss and pushed their way home to the King, while Juanillo returned to his little Princess. And the magic milk restored the King's hearing.

But a greater danger now awaited Clotaldo. A powerful neighboring sovereign suddenly declared war against him. He was quite unprepared. In his youth, Clotaldo's bravery in battle had secured the throne. But, now, in his declining years, he feared to take the field, not through any cowardly fear for his life, but that the glory of his country might not be tarnished by his waning energy. So the King called to him his two elder sons-in-law and said:

"Your valor has been proved on many occasions, now there is further need of it and I give to you the command of all my forces. Go you now as my own sons, to meet the foe."

This order filled the brothers with fear, for there appeared no way to fulfil the King's commands. How could Juanillo himself fight the battle for them with-

out an army? And how could they transfer to him the command of the army without betraying all?

So they rode along, sad of heart, to put themselves at the head of the King's forces, hoping that Juanillo would again aid them. Soon they met him riding at fiery speed on a great black horse, with two of the enemy's standards planted on his stirrups. They saw by the colors that the enemy had been laid low.

For at the first threat of war, Juan had taken gentle leave of the little Princess and had gone into the wilderness, and blowing upon the black hair, had called the third of the magic horses and told it of his need. Mounting this fiery steed, he had charged with such impetuosity against the enemy, that the whole army had broken in flight and he had borne off their banners as trophies.

Now the brothers with soft words persuaded him to give them the banners. But the payment Juan exacted this time was that they should permit him to brand them each on the shoulder as though they had been his slaves taken in war.

After this he returned home to the little Princess, while his brothers carried the banners to the King. With this new proof of their merit, Clotaldo's anger

rose high against Juan, his third son-in-law, whom he supposed to be living in shameful indolence and doing nothing for the honor of the dynasty and nation. So he pronounced a decree banishing him from the Kingdom, and forbidding him ever to appear before him. The false brothers, who had always lived in fear that their treachery would some day be discovered, upheld the King in this intention. They would breathe more freely when Juan was removed to some distance.

Now Juan had been forbearing and very generous all this time. This was rather too much. He could not remain silent if the little Princess must be banished with him from her friends and her country. Then, too she made him see how sad it would be for the people when the old King died, were they to live under the governance of the two wicked brothers.

So Juan went to the King, and on his knees, begged him with great humility to grant him one last favor before he was banished from the country. He asked that all the kingdom be invited to a great farewell banquet to be given on his last day.

The good King granted his request and appointed a day when all the great and lowly of the kingdom met for a splendid banquet.

Juanillo dressed himself for this occasion as became his true character. His chestnut curls were parted on his lofty forehead and everyone was struck by the dignity with which his broad shoulders carried the crimson and ermine mantle. In fact few recognized Juanillo at all. But with earnest mien as one who had a grave duty to perform, he went up to the King and laying down before him the two pears and the two ears, he said:

"The time has come, O, King, to make known the truth. Long have I suffered in silence. But if my secret is to be the cause of my banishment and the exile of my dear Princess, I must make known that it was I who delivered the Princesses from the Enchanted Tower; and I who climbed the perilous mountains of Sclavonia to bring the healing water; I who brought the lion's milk through many dangers from the deserts of Albania; I who overcame your enemies and brought home the two standards.

"Here are my proofs, if more are needed, bid the princes, my brothers, uncover their shoulders. They shall be found branded as my slaves taken in war."

The good King was much astonished at these revelations, but now came back to him remembrance of

what the little Princess Fatima had tried to tell him, and how he had thought her mad for the story. And when he had patiently investigated everything and was convinced of the truth of Juan's statement, he was filled with indignation. He gave command that the wicked brothers should be put to death and his elder daughters banished for their part in the infamy. He embraced Juan in sight of all the people, and declared him heir to the kingdom.

Juan, however, would not allow his false brothers to be put to death, but sent them away out of the country. Houses and money were granted them that they might spend the rest of their days in harmless retirement.

The little Princess and Juan reigned long and happily after the old King had passed to his reward, and were loved of all the people.

DON FERNAN AND THE ORANGE PRINCESS

ONE summer morning Don Fernan Torreno rode across the Roman Bridge of Salamanca. Half-way across he halted to salute the shrine of Ponte Medio and to admire, for the hundredth time, the quaint stone monster nearby.

After a while he rode on moodily with his eyes fixed on the water of the Tormes, in the pools of which the eye caught the gleam of burnished trout basking in the sunshine. At the bridgehead he turned to the right, crossed the shallow Zurguan, and drew rein to take a farewell look at the city.

High above the Tormes, rose Salamanca, ramparted on its three hills; a noble sight with its colleges,

churches, and towers delicately mellow against the intense, cloudless sky.

Fernan's heart was heavy as he rode northward towards his home, Zamora. For him the future was dreary indeed.

Ever since the death of his father, three years ago, his mother had pestered him with plans for his early marriage. But as yet there was no woman for whom he would have spread his cloak in the dust as a footcloth, after the fashion of the students in honor of any girl they admired.

Riding without haste, Don Fernan came at nightfall to Corrales, under its hill set with windmills. Here he slept, and after a leisurely journey, on the next afternoon sighted Zamora, crowded within its lofty ramparts on a height above the Douro. The cathedral was rose-tinged by the evening flush, as he crossed the tall bridge under which the river dashed foaming through the sluices of many water-mills. Gloomy shadows seemed to close about him when his horse's hoofs rang in the twilit streets.

His mother's welcome was so warm that it chilled him with forebodings as to her purpose. Their house, massive, lofty and brown, towered above the southern

wall of the town. Fernan's study windows opened on the glory of one hundred miles of sunny plain, in which, far to the south, lay Salamanca.

Next morning when the young man was looking beyond the silver and scarlet of the great, fragrant carnations in earthern pots on the balcony, and at the lofty peaks of the Gredos, faint against the southern blue, his mother laid before him her plans for his marriage. She spoke for a long time, and though for the moment he put her off, she would not be denied but pressed him daily, till life became intolerable.

At last, one evening, as they sat together on the balcony, looking beyond the river at the far heights bronzed by the sultry twilight, Don Fernan said:

"My dear mother, you have so often touched on this and other unpleasant matters that I feel the time has come to speak plainly, once and for all. What I am about to say will grieve you, but unless you wish my life to be utterly wretched you will listen with patience. I fear my silence has misled you. Therefore, let me confess that the loss of liberty the married endure would be tolerable, only if I truly loved the companion to whom I should be bound. So far, I have found no

such woman, either here in Zamora or elsewhere. I pray you, mother, cease to pester me about insipid girls, who would cloy me within a week of the marriage. It is a true proverb that says, *The golden sheath conceals a blade of lead.* Still, as like all mothers you are set on this business, I have a plan to propose. It is this:

"Our private fortune is sufficient to maintain us both in comfort, though not in luxury, so it is not necessary that I should at once bestir myself to gain a livelihood. I earnestly ask your permission to travel for three years and a day, during which period I shall try to discover a woman whom I can consent to see daily within four walls, for that, believe me, is the touchstone of marriage."

Señora Torreno, shocked and disappointed, at first refused her consent. But finding that her son was respectfully obstinate she gave way, and Don Fernan set out upon his quest.

For many months he journeyed, and to his great joy met with adventures in which, being a resolute fellow, strongly built, and a skilful swordsman, he came off with credit, but also with a wound that for some weeks laid him on his back at Jumila. When he had fully

recovered he travelled southward, and presently found himself in a lonely region among the "eyes" or lagoons of the Guadiana.

One evening, as he approached a stream he saw before him a ragged old woman. Her rags were filthy, her face seemed moulded out of greasy mud, and over it hung a tangle of discolored locks as rough as hemp on a distaff. She begged for charity, and also asked him to carry her across the stream.

Don Fernan gave her three *reals;* then, leading his horse to a large stone, helped her to the saddle, took off his boots, and guided the horse across a ford. On the further bank he halted by a fountain, put on his boots again, and asked his passenger where she wished to go, for as she was old and feeble he would willingly give her further help.

"Help me to dismount, Caballero," quavered the crone. The young man lifted down the unsavory bundle.

No sooner had her feet touched the ground than she changed into a woman of dignified appearance, clothed with such splendor that Don Fernan had never seen the like, even on royalty. Her green robes were of the

richest damask silk, embroidered at the hem with pearls; and priceless jewels flashed on her neck and hands.

"Many thanks for your help, Don Fernan," she said, smiling. "I find you are kind and courteous. I believe you also to be brave; and I know on what quest you are bound. Listen to me. It may well repay you to do so.

"I am the Fairy Dichosa, and I have a bitter enemy, a magician. Out of revenge five years ago he carried off three princesses, my god-daughters, for, as all the world knows, we fairies are often godmothers. These poor innocents he has imprisoned in the Orange Garden, beyond the seas. If you so desire, I will convey you across the water and set you on the road that leads to the garden. More than this I cannot do. You must find your own way thither. Should you reach the place, and accomplish the deliverance of my darlings, you will find in one of them the wife you are seeking; for they have no equals among women. If you do not care to make the attempt, you have but to say so. I will give you a valuable jewel as a reward for your courtesy to me, and the matter will end there."

Don Fernan's blood flamed fiercely. Here indeed was no common adventure! His very sword seemed to reproach him for delay.

"I accept," he said, clapping his hand on the hilt. "Truly, I did not think so much romance was left us. Señora, I will attempt this pleasant exploit."

"Pleasant it will be to a bold heart, but far from easy," replied the Fairy. "Let me give you two counsels: never lose courage and follow all instructions; you will then succeed in this dangerous enterprise. Now fasten your horse to this tree. Do not be uneasy about the good animal; I will take care of it during your absence."

Fernan obeyed, whereupon the Fairy, dipping her hand in the fountain, sprinkled the young man with water. As the drops flashed towards him they gleamed like a play of lightning. Then his senses swam, and he lost consciousness.

When he recovered he was lying on a hill slope in a strange country, steeped in moonlight warmer and more intense than even that of Andalusia. Behind him tall, white cliffs, moon-washed, rose to a heaven of gray velvet. Before him stretched a plain, shimmering under the full moon clear coined in the East. Far

away, on the levels southwards, rose a pale delicate Palace. No other habitation was in sight.

"Those who need guidance must seek a guide," thought Torreno. "I will visit yonder Palace and inquire my way."

For two hours he walked on and, as the moon began to sink, neared the Palace. It resembled a vast jewel-case chiselled out of silver, and crowned by pearly domes. Around it spread a garden enclosed by walls of silver, in which were trees, bushes, and flowers, all of silver gleaming in the moonlight. Delicate shadows netted the pale ground.

And now Don Fernan found that he was not alone. Ghostly, gleaming figures, noiseless as night moths, floated above and about him. The air was filled with their radiance, as though the moonbeams were taking on substance and shape.

Fernan approached a portal built of moonstone, and entered a great hall, dim lit by the moon glowing through the dome above. On the pavement knelt a number of shadowy figures, bowed as if in prayer.

A form shrouded in a silvery veil, that wrapped it like a frost, barred Fernan's way and inquired his business.

"I am bound for the Orange Garden," he replied, "and have come to ask for directions as to the way thither."

"Withdraw," was the answer, "for these spirits are the ghosts of those who once inhabited the moon, and are assembled here to pray that it may come to life again. Concerning your request, follow the valley yonder westwards for a week, till you reach the Palace of the Sun. It may be that there you will find someone who will direct you further."

All night Don Fernan hastened down the valley. Wide-winged bats circled around him with cries that were needle points of stabbing shrillness; huge owls and other night-birds swept past him on muffled wings. At daybreak, worn out, he lay down in a cave to sleep.

For seven days he journeyed. On the fourth day the valley opened into a desert in which the sands, sun-bleached to the paleness of wood-ash, lay fretted by violet shadows. Mountains, stark as the ribs of a famished world, rose out of these deserts. At rare intervals were hollows full of brackish water, and overhung by date-palms. Fernan ate of the fruit.

These green places were infested by monkeys so large and fierce that he was often in the utmost dan-

ger. Moreover, by day, on some pale wave-crest of sand, or fang of sun-faded rock, massive tawny lions with eyes of fiery topaz glowered down on him. Serpents bright as jewel strings darted past him, living arrows of death. The nights were broken by the thunder of roaring, and by the still more chilling sound of creatures creeping and hissing among the sand-crests.

But worst of all was the torrent of flame pouring out of cloudless heavens, blue and burnished as a peacock's breast. Every breath drew fire into the lungs. Nevertheless, Fernan persevered.

At last, on the seventh day, he came to a river. This he followed till it widened into a lake in the middle of which, on an islet, was a Palace built of gold. The noonday flame, reflected from it, seared Fernan's eyes.

By the bank lay a boat framed with plates of gold, and furnished with oars of gilded cedar. He stepped into this strange craft and rowed to the island. This, also, was of gold, stainless as a clear flame and so pure that its softness was seamed by the prow of the boat as it chafed against it.

Around the Palace was a garden in which all the trees, plants and flowers were of polished gold. The light glinted intolerably on their lustre, the air was

heavy with the warmth of heated metal, and through it flitted fiery shapes, swift and bright as sun-flashes on troubled water.

Torreno, approaching the gate of the Palace, was challenged by a beautiful being in golden armor, who inquired his business. The young man explained the purpose that had led him to the place.

"Do not intrude further," answered the spirit. "This is the pavilion of my Lord the Sun, and here we, his servants, receive our master's commands: no light matter, so many are the lands that desire his bounty. As for your quest, you must travel to the Palace of the Stars. Follow the river southwards till you come to the Purple Mountains. When you have climbed them, you will see the Star Palace on the plain below. There you will be told what you desire to know. It is a week's journey."

During three days Torreno pressed along the bank of the river. Then, before him, towering almost to the sun itself, rose two amethyst peaks, on whose pinnacles the light flashed in blue fire. The young man ascended the slopes to a pass between the peaks. The world opened out beneath him in a great circle, shining pale through leagues of blazing air. As he climbed,

the snow lay thicker, till he sank knee-deep at every stride. Ice caves gleamed green in the whiteness, and silence more intense than that of dawn held the frozen air.

All through one day and the succeeding night, without touching food, Fernan persevered, and at dawn saw blue plains stretching far below to the very rim of the world.

Here, with a sword-thrust, he slew a mountain bear. Eating some of the flesh he pressed on, a mere ghost of a man, and descended, ledge after ledge, to the foothills, from which he saw a Palace shining on the plain. He was now so weary that he slept out the day in the hollow of a huge tree. At sundown he made his way towards the Palace.

The night was windless and without a moon. Unnumbered brilliant stars clustered in a vault of black marble, and the lustrous gloom was shaken by the fire of their jewels. Orion was journeying overhead when Fernan reached the Palace. This was built of crystal, walls, dome and minarets. Around it was a garden enclosed by a wall of aquamarines, on which, and on the flowers and plants of crystal within, the starlight shimmered.

Fernan, fevered with fatigue and excitement, approached the main entrance. It was open, and from within came the lilt of dancing music so beautiful, and set to so compelling a measure, that it seemed as though all life must move to its cadence.

Through the doorway the young man saw a spacious hall, lighted by lamps that resembled sun-touched gems, below which a host of spirits wove rainbows, as they floated on iridescent wings. Around Fernan, back and forth, meteor-like, sped ethereal shapes more beautiful even than clouds or flowers.

As in a dream, drawn by their beauty, he advanced into the hall. Suddenly the music ceased, and the dancers parted, opening a path to a throne of jasper, on which sat a figure that beckoned to Fernan.

The young man knelt silently before the Power.

"Who are you, and what seek you here?" asked a clear, cold voice.

Falteringly Fernan told his story.

"Because you have dared," was the answer, "you shall have your wish. Go westwards for seven days, directing your path by the stars, till you reach a grove filled with orange trees. Among them you will find one bearing three oranges and no more. Cut the

branch whereon these hang, and carry it away, disregard all the other fruit! What else must be done, is for you to discover. Depart at once on your quest, and do not look behind you when you leave this place."

All that night Fernan limped on his way westwards. At dawn he found himself in a deserted and barren country, in which the prickly pear seemed the only thriving plant. He fed on their fruit and slept out the day, having determined to travel during the darkness, so that the stars might guide him.

In this way he continued for a week, struggling across the barren plains. Every night depth upon depth of stars filled the heavens with jewel dust, out of which in lilac clusters hung the greater lights, shedding a cool and subtle perfume.

On the seventh morning, from the crest of a little hill, he saw a Garden enclosed by walls of rosy marble. As Fernan approached it he laughed, looking at his clothes, which sun and travel had reduced to faded rags. "Truly a pretty figure of a wooer," he thought.

The entrance was guarded by gilded gates. These, however, were only latched. Entering, he wandered through groves of orange trees, among whose dark, glossy foliage the fruit hung so thickly that the trees

resembled piles of golden, royal orbs. Canals, marble-lined, framed smooth lustrous water, in which the yellow glow was mirrored.

Don Fernan moved among the sultry shadows heavy with the odor that the sun drew from the fruit. All the trees seemed equally laden, but at last in a remote corner of the great enclosure he came on a plant that bore three oranges only, great and perfect fruit, on a single bough.

Fernan's heart beat fast as he cut through the branch with his dagger. Bearing it carefully, he retraced his way to the entrance. The Garden seemed full of whispers, and the trees swayed, as though a strong breeze were stirring them.

No sooner had he passed through the gilded gates than they clashed behind him. The earth rocked. A mist filled the air, and, when it had cleared, nothing but a barren wilderness, scorched by the sun, surrounded Don Fernan.

Under the noonday fire, a baking heat, fiercer than the glow overhead, rose from the soil. The rocks seemed to have forgotten the long-stored coolness of stone. With dry, cracked lips, and dazed by the in-

tolerable glare, Fernan wandered blindly with his prize in search of shadow and water. Neither could he find, and exhaustion compelled him to sit down on the trunk of a fallen tree, which was dried to the likeness of a huge gray bone.

A cool scent rose sharply from the oranges on the bough. Maddened by thirst, the young man drew his dagger, plucked the smallest of the three oranges, laid it on the dry wood and cut the fruit in two.

Out of it leapt a girl wearing blue, silken robes. On her head a princely diadem glittered. Laughing at the astonished youth, she cried:

"What will you give me, Caballero?"

But he, with a sudden deep wisdom, made no answer. Slowly her blue robes faded into the azure above, her jewels dissolved in the golden glory of the sun, and nothing was left save the empty skin of the fruit.

Fernan sat still for a while. Then, setting his mouth, he plucked another orange and cut it asunder. A girl stood lightly balanced on the tree-trunk. Her hair curled blue-black above yet blacker eyes, her skin was apricot-colored, her robes seemed fashioned of

crimson pomegranate blossoms. Golden ornaments tinkled on her wrists, as holding out her arms, she cried:

"What will you give me, Don Fernan?"

But again Fernan made no answer. The figure wavered for a moment in the bright afternoon radiance, then faded like a rosy cloud.

The young man wiped his brow. By him lay the third orange, and, looking at it, he drew his breath quickly, for only this fruit remained. He plucked it gently, and, as it lay in his hands, it seemed to him that within the scented, golden casket, throbbed a life so attuned to his that it kept time to the beating of his pulse.

Trembling, he laid the great orange on the tree-trunk, and closing his eyes, grasped his dagger and clove the fruit with one desperate stroke.

She who stood before him was wrapped in tissue of gold; her head and hands flashed jewel fire. Looking at her, Fernan knew that his quest was at an end. Her voice came like the sound of flowing water in a dry place:

"And what will you give me, Fernan?"

In deep broken tones, he answered, "What you will."

They sat long side by side, she all gold, he beggar-like in threadbare discolored garments; nevertheless, in the judgment of that great wayfarer the sun, the dignity of those travel-soiled rags shamed her magnificence. Eagerly they exchanged stories. The girl told Fernan that she was the only child of the King of Buenaventura, and that she had waited five years for a deliverer. It was dark when they had finished.

"And now," said the Princess, "it shall be my part to lighten the homeward journey for you."

She spread her golden cloak on the ground, where it glittered like an after-gleam of the day. The Princess sat down on the cloak, bade Fernan sit beside her, and touched a ring on her left hand.

At once the cloak rose with them to so great a height that for a while the sun shone upon them once more. All night they travelled swiftly northwards. Below them spread the earth, a purple shadow; overhead the stars hung almost within reach.

At dawn they descended slowly, and coming to rest among lilies by a river, saw on a hill, at no great distance, the city of Buenaventura, all rose and gold in the sunrise. By the stream stood the Fairy Dichosa, leading Don Fernan's horse, sleek with long idleness.

"Well sped, Caballero!" she cried. "So Don Caprichoso would have none of my other god-daughters. Well, let me confess that he has chosen wisely. Farewell, and good fortune attend you."

Don Fernan set the Princess behind him on the horse, and rode towards the city. About their path many people gathered, recognizing the Princess. By the time the two entered the city such numbers had assembled that Fernan could scarcely guide his horse through the crowd to the palace.

On the steps stood the King and Queen to welcome their child. So gallantly were the courtiers dressed that Don Fernan would have been abashed, had not the magnificent nobles openly expressed their admiration for the exploits and the bearing of the travel-worn guest.

The King and Queen gladly received Don Fernan as their son-in-law. Don Fernan sent for his mother, who now had her desire. And in after years he and the Princess became sovereigns of Buenaventura.

CARLO MAGNO AND THE GIANT

MANY tales of Spain are full of memories of Charlemagne, Carlo Magno, they call him, but strangely enough history says comparatively little of his doings there.

One of the Moorish Kings, who sought the alliance of Charlemagne in the wars in which the Moorish chiefs were at the time engaged, had an only and beautiful daughter. She was the apple of his eye, and was guarded with jealous care, indulged in every wish, and waited on by the most beautiful maidens in a fairy-like palace. She knew nothing of her father's wars and dangers. Life seemed all pleasure to her; and it was the delight of every one to obey her slightest command.

But life passed amid continual sunshine, flowers, and harmony becomes stupid. When the Moorish Princess was fifteen years old, she began to long for some newer and more exciting pleasure. Her fond father, glad to hear her express a wish, that he might but have the satisfaction of gratifying it, promised to give her such fresh diversion as she had never before seen.

For this purpose he planned a great fête, at which all the mightiest men of his land were to perform feats of arms and combat before her.

The Princess had never looked upon any combat more serious than that of her pet doves. She was delighted beyond measure with the tournaments, and thought she could never tire of seeing the brave horsemen contend; dealing each other such heavy blows, and all the while seemingly indifferent to danger. Nevertheless, the time came when the sameness of these shows bored her too, and she began to crave for new excitement.

Then the Moorish King sent out heralds inviting valiant men of other countries to come for the tournament, each to fight after the fashion of his own country. Many warriors of renown came eagerly to

display their prowess, in hope of winning the bright smile of the Moorish King's daughter.

Among the strangers came one day a powerful Giant. He was five cubits high, and rode on a horse as tall as a house. All the mighty men of the King's army turned pale when they saw him. The King regretted that his invitation had been to all comers. He could find no courteous excuse for excluding the Giant. To offer an unfair one, would have been dangerous, as the Giant's anger would have been terrible if provoked. So the King received him as cordially as his dismay would permit. The Giant seemed good-natured enough and too full of his own consequence to think of picking a quarrel with any body.

He challenged every warrior to fight with him. But no one would venture; and this put him in still better humor. Then he showed off all his feats of strength, to the great delight of the court and of the Princess. She was so astonished at his prodigies of strength, that she leant out from her balcony, and suffered the veil to blow away from her face.

The Giant happened to be looking towards her. That moment sufficed to make him fall in love with her. With renewed resolve he exhibited his surprising

strength. But when evening came he stole up to her window, high in the tower of the Alcazar; which his head just reached as he stood upon the ground. Putting his face against the lattice, he whispered very softly that he must speak to her. The poor little Princess was dreadfully frightened. She could not guess what he wanted, but thought it would not be dignified to show fear. So she went to the window and asked him what he wished. The Giant replied that he loved her, and she must marry him. The Princess was terrified. She knew that she had no means of resisting him if he chose to carry her off by force. She thought, too, that her father himself would have very little chance if he attempted to fight him. What a dreadful thing it would be if he should kill her father —her dear father, who was so fond of her! Yet in her fright, she could think of no better stratagem than to stammer forth that he must give her time to think about it.

The Giant was satisfied with this reply, and promised to give her until the next day for an answer. All that night, and all the next day, the little Princess thought and thought of what excuse she could make; but she could think of nothing but to ask him to give

her another day. Then again she sat and thought, and no solution came. She dared not tell her father, lest in his indignation he should challenge the Giant to fight, and be killed by him.

But when the Giant came the third time, and she had thought of no stratagem for getting rid of him, she had to tell him plainly that she could not make up her mind to marry him.

At first the Giant tried all sorts of clumsy persuasions and entreaties; but the Princess was firm. At last, finding she would not yield, he grew fiercely angry, seized the Alcazar by the roof, and made it rock backwards and forwards. He tore up trees, threw them on the ground, and stamped upon the earth with a noise like peals of thunder. The poor little Princess was so terrified that she hardly knew what was happening. Then she heard him swear that he would come back and carry her off and that she could not escape him. After repeating this threat several times he disappeared.

It was a long time before the Princess came to her senses again, for she had fainted from terror. When she did, she began to wonder what the terrible trouble was which had so frightened her. By degrees the

memory of the stormy scene came back to her, but all was now so calm and still, that she could hardly realize what had happened. It was a great relief to find that the Giant had gone.

Then on inquiry she learned that he lived a long, long way off, in a valley as far below the level of the plain as the height on which her father's Alcazar stood was above it. She remembered, indeed, his threat that he would come back. But she could not really believe that he meant to carry her off at all. Why should he come back to do what he might just as well have done at once?

Time passed, and she heard no more of the Giant. People stopped talking of his feats of strength, and the Princess forgot all about him. A new trouble gave another direction to her thoughts. A neighboring king made war upon her father the Moorish King with overwhelming forces. Every one was full of apprehension. The Moorish King, distracted with the fear of losing his kingdom, had no time even to think of his beloved daughter. The Princess heard from one and another of the attendants that things were going badly, that the enemy was getting the upper hand, and advancing nearer and nearer.

We must now go back to the Giant, whom we left marching off in no good humor. The truth was, that with all his strength he was not very courageous—he was more of a bully than a warrior. He had heard a great deal of the bravery and more particularly of the excellent arms of the Moors. He knew they would rise as one man to defend the Princess if he carried her off. He did not like the thought of their making pincushions of his legs with their fine sharp swords, even if they could not do him further harm. So he resolved to carry out his plan in a way which would be less dangerous to himself.

The Giant then went on to the neighboring Enemy King, and treacherously told the number and situation of the Moorish army, and the condition of the defences of the Alcazar, and pointed out the least protected points of the country by which an incursion could be made. Having received a rich guerdon for this information, he returned home and set all his people to cutting a deep cave, which he made them extend further and further in a sloping direction till it should come out opposite the Alcazar where the Moorish Princess dwelt. By this means he could reach her unperceived, and carry her off without danger to his

own skin, while the city was in an uproar brought about by the invasion of the Enemy King.

Now it happened that various underground rumblings had been observed for some time past by the country people. But the minds of all the people were too much filled with terror of the advancing foe to have time to fear an underground foe.

Thus the Giant worked on steadily and without hindrance. The poor little Princess was far from thinking that her tormentor was so near. Much less did she dream of his continually nearing approach! And instead she sat crying over her father's danger till her face became quite pale and her eyes worn with tears.

At last a day came when every one seemed bright with fresh hope; and the attendants ran hastily to tell her the good news. The Moorish King had appealed to the youthful conqueror, Carlo Magno, for aid in his distress. Carlo Magno had come with his army and had entirely turned the tide of war. The enemy had been completely repulsed, and the victorious army was returning in triumph to the city.

The news spread like wildfire. Every one hastened to deck his house festively, and put on his best attire, in

order to honor the conquerors. And when Carlo Magno appeared, all the people shouted their thanks in loud acclamations. The little Princess wished very much to see the young hero who had saved her father's life. And, though it is not the custom for Moorish women to appear in public, she contrived to peep at him as he passed by, and wished it had been this handsome hero who had wanted to marry her instead of the monstrous Giant. Having once seen Carlo Magno, she wished to see him again. She sent and begged him to come to her, that she might thank him for having saved her father's kingdom. But it was not entirely for her father's sake that she contrived that interview!

When Carlo Magno came, though very courteous he was also very reserved, and stayed but a short time. He assured her that what he had done was nothing at all; that his sword was every ready to defend the right. Then he took his leave without paying her any compliments. The Moorish Princess was very sad when she saw him go away; and sadder still when she learned that no Christian Prince might wed a Moorish maid. Carlo Magno himself, however, was sorry for the poor child, but he could hold no intimacy with the Moors.

The Giant, meantime, had gone on boring away.

Though he was now quite under the Alcazar, all in the Palace above were so full of festivity and rejoicing that nobody heeded the sound of his pickaxe. On his part, he was well satisfied with what he heard going on in the upper world. There had been unmistakable sounds of the clashing of swords, and he felt sure that the Princess' father was getting the worst of it. And now, when he heard the sounds of busy running to and fro in the festive Alcazar, he was sure that the Enemy King was pillaging the place.

At last the tunnel was finished. The Giant crept out in the darkness of night, threaded the familiar way to the Princess' window, and rested his foot on the cornice of the first story for a stepping-stone. Then with one grasp of his hand he swept her off her couch before she had time to open her eyes. Closing her mouth, so that she might not cry out and raise an alarm, he hurried silently back with her to his subterranean passage, down the sloping path of which he triumphantly carried her.

Quick and silent as he had been, the whole affair had been watched by the keen, bright eyes of a little black slave, as she lay at the foot of her mistress' couch. She had seen the huge hand thrust through the window and

spread over the room,—the nail of its little finger had indeed grazed her forehead. She recognized it at once as belonging to the Giant, dread of whom she had so often shared with her mistress. And no sooner had the Giant snatched away the Princess, than the black slave rushed madly into the banqueting-hall, tearing her clothes, plucking out her hair, and crying out in wailing accents what had befallen. At first no one believed her strange story. But when at last her earnestness induced the Moorish King to search the Princess' room he found her gone. Then all the people began to wail. The banquet was broken up, and every one ran hither and thither, not knowing what to do; for, withal that the Giant was so big, none had seen him pass to tell which way he had gone.

But Carlo Magno, brave and self-possessed in the midst of all, saw here a chance to be of service to the beautiful Moorish Princess, and make up for the chagrin he had caused her in the morning.

It was plain to him that if the Giant had stood under the window, as the little black slave had said, he must have left his foot-prints there; and that he could thence be tracked whithersoever he was gone. So he called in a loud voice, and bade all the people stand still for

he did not want them to destroy any traces of the Giant's foot-prints. If they would all remain without stirring, he would deliver their Princess.

The voice of Carlo Magno, after what he had already done for them, possessed great authority with the people, so all stood quite still. He then bade the little black slave guide him to the window. There, under it, sure enough he found the Giant's foot-prints, two great holes in the sand, like dry tanks for water. Allowing due space for his prodigious stride, Carlo Magno readily found another great hole and another, till they brought him to the mouth of the tunnel. When all the people saw that gaping cave which had not been there before that night, and gazed down its descending gullet, in their amazement they thought it the mouth of the underworld opened to spew forth its monster.

But Carlo Magno vowed that he would deliver the Princess though his enterprise should indeed lead him into the realms of Hades. And all the people applauded his courage, but he rode down the black path alone.

Though he travelled with great speed, the Giant had now a good start. But Carlo Magno made such good

speed that he had not gone a hundred miles before he heard the Giant's laugh, exulting over his prize, resounding through the gloomy passage, although he was still at some considerable distance. This roused Carlo Magno's wrath, and made him urge on his steed yet faster. At last he came within sight of the Giant. And then, when he saw those monstrous arms bearing away the little helpless Princess, his compassion made him use even greater speed. And just as he reached the mouth of the Giant's cavern, Carlo Magno managed to overleap him by one bound of his horse. Then wheeling round he confronted the Giant with fearless eye.

The Giant, as already said was more of a bully than a warrior. When he saw the dauntless knight so brave and firm, and withal encased in such strong armor, brandishing his sword, he felt that his best defence lay in threatening and boasting, to frighten Carlo Magno.

With a terrible voice, therefore, which made the rocks resound, the Giant demanded, using every abusive name, what he meant by venturing to appear before him.

Carlo Magno, however, knew that the dogs who bark most bite least. So he waited unmoved till the Giant

had exhausted his violent language. Then quite undismayed Carlo Magno commanded him to surrender the maiden.

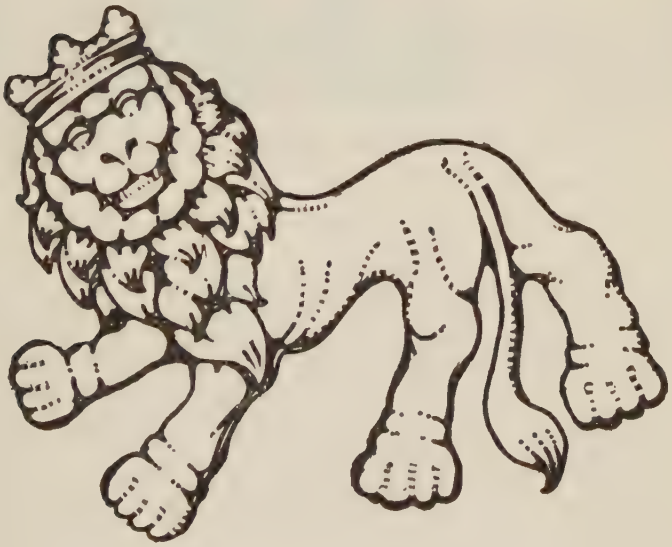
Another loud and angry volley followed upon this demand, with further threats of terrible vengeance.

"Then," said Carlo Magno, "if you will not give her up quietly, I must even take her by force."

With that he dismounted and drew his sword. The Giant now saw that he must defend his life, or lose it. So, forced to fight, he drew his clumsy sword and began laying about him in right-determined fashion; but all his blows alighted far and wide of the Prince. Furious at finding his awkward efforts ineffectual, while the highly trained agility of Carlo Magno saved him from all his strokes, the Giant began laying about him with such untempered violence that at last his weapon dropped from his hand. Fully expecting that Carlo Magno would try to possess himself of it, the Giant hastily bent down to regain it. But Carlo Magno had no such thought. Waiting calmly till the monster had bent sufficiently low, he swung his fine sharp blade and at one thrust buried it in his heart.

Then he severed the Giant's head to bear it away as

his trophy. Raising in his arms the Princess who had swooned away at sight of the horrible combat, he bore her swiftly upwards through the subterranean path, and delivered her unharmed to her father.



THE BRANCH OF ALMOND BLOSSOM

I

In the days when Toledo was still in possession of the Moors, Azarque held a great tournament in honor of the fair Celindja. The night before the fêtes the city was all astir with excitement. There were to be contests of arms followed by dancing. There were to be feasts and tiltings. Slaves in the courtyards cleansed their masters' arms, polished their lances, sharpened their arrows, and gave care to the pennons and standards that were to wave gaily in the breeze on the morrow.

In and about the city were gathered all the tribes famous for chivalry and bravery, such as the Gomeles

of Granada, the Gazules of Alcala, the Audalles from Ronda, the Sarracinos from Cordova, the Mazas, the Alfarries, and the Achapices. Above them all for valor were renowned the Azarques, the powerful Vanegas, the Portoleses, and the Abencerrajes.

Every one had come to do honor to Azarque and Celindja. And were lovers ever more worthy of honors and fêtes than they—the one so fair and graceful, the other so noble and renowned in peace and war.

The day broke fair and clear. All the people of Toledo went wild with joy. Shouts of astonishment and admiration rose at the beautiful sight before their eyes. The tribes were of equal bravery and strength, and each was arrayed in their particular costumes.

The Gazules wore red liveries, with fringes of fine gold, and scarlet and yellow plumes in their caps. The Audalles wore yellow with gray, blue, and white plumes in their caps. The Saracinos wore blue, mulberry, and straw colored robes. The soldiers from Granada were clothed in scarlet, with pomegranates emblazoned upon their waving banners. The arrogant Azarques wore green, yellow, and black plumes in their caps. Every one wore his most beautiful and gorgeous garments.

The narrow streets of Toledo were brilliant with colored banners and gay with laughter. Trumpets and martial music resounded throughout the city. Every window was filled with spectators as the procession passed to the Zocodover, where the fêtes were to be held.

Celindja was queen of the fête. In her splendor of silk and gold embroidery, she shone like the moon among the stars. Her almond-shaped dark eyes and ruddy hair made a striking contrast to the olive skins and jet-black locks of her companions. And Azarque walked beside her, proud of the beauty he could call his own.

There were tiltings and tournaments, feats of archery, and games of skilful riding, and the Azarques were always acclaimed the victors. When at last the Moors were tired of the sports, they had won the hearts and tender glances of the Granadine beauties, who dressed in their most gorgeous robes had watched the tourneys.

Suddenly a trumpet sounded. Three beautiful calls were played upon it, to the great astonishment of the Moors assembled for amusement and gaiety.

"It is a Christian bugle-call!" cried Azarque, start-

ing up from his place. "The Christians must be upon us."

This speech fell amid great confusion. United by a common danger, the various tribes began to prepare for battle. At last there rode upon the scene, a herald bearing a white banner. The Moors at once placed their weapons in rest, and Azarque rose to demand his errand.

"I come in behalf of Don Ramiro of Aragon," said the herald, "to request that he may be allowed to join in the wedding festivities of the chivalrous and noble Azarque and the lovely Celindja."

"Comes he alone?" asked Azarque.

"Quite alone, except for his personal servants, of whom I am one."

Thereupon Azarque courteously invited Don Ramiro to join in the fêtes, and arranged that the Moors most renowned for bravery and skill should engage him in the tourney.

Soon, Don Ramiro clad in chain mail, appeared riding his beautiful white charger, which was adorned with rich crimson velvet trappings, embroidered with gold and precious stones. The knight's armor was of steel with the visor of his helmet open. Across his

shoulder and over his breast he wore a pink scarf, and in his casque, a branch of pink almond blossoms. His motto was *Fidelity*.

Bowing low in the direction of the balcony, in which were assembled Celindja, the queen of the tourney, with her attendants, the knight placed his lance at rest. Then the herald threw down his gauntlet as a challenge to the Moorish chiefs.

Now among the attendants of the lovely Celindja, was a Christian maiden, who had been held captive for many years. She belonged to a noble Aragonese family, but the ransom demanded for her surrender was too great for her impoverished people. Hopeless of rescue, gradually she had become reconciled to her new life. For months she had watched and hoped for deliverance. But in vain. Summers changed to winter, and winter blossomed again into spring and summer, but no one had come for Isabella.

Many eyes turned towards her on this day of rejoicing, for many were the suitors for her favor. But her heart warmed to none. She received every one with such disdain that more than once had Celindja rebuked her for her hauteur.

"Why are my people treated with such contempt?"

she would ask Isabella. "The highest chiefs of the Moors are regarded by you with disdain and aversion. Who are you, to despise the race of Islam?"

"I am a Christian maiden," Isabella answered, while her eyes flashed and her cheeks glowed. "Sooner would I die than show favor to a dog of a Moor!"

Often Celindja was so enraged at her obstinacy that she punished her severely. But nothing served to move Isabella and she remained cold and haughty, keeping at a distance all who tried to win her favor. At the jousts and tiltings, Isabella stood as usual, behind Celindja's couch, waving over her an enormous fan of peacock feathers mingled with gold and silver.

Isabella's dress was of white silk striped with gold and on her head, she wore a blue cap heavily fringed with gold sequins, from which her long black hair fell nearly to her knees. Bangles of gold clasped her wrists and arms, and glittered on her ankles. Her small feet were shod in blue slippers encrusted with silver embroidery.

Her large eyes glanced hither and thither; listlessly she gazed at the spectacle gorgeously spread before her. In vain her admirers performed feats of strength and fine horsemanship, hoping for a smile from the

proud, cold Isabella, who acknowledged them with but a disdainful inclination of the head. Then they rode away, angry with disappointment.

But when the arrival of the Christian knight had been announced, a look of interest came into her face, her eyes grew bright and she drew herself proudly to her full height. The very sight of the chain mail, the beautiful white charger, and the northern dress made her heart leap with pleasure. Memories of former days and of tournaments in her homeland came crowding upon her with painful vividness.

Isabella was tall and slight, a conspicuous centre of the group, rising as she did above her companions, and forming a fine background for the lovely Celindja as she reclined upon her couch. No wonder that the first glance of Don Ramiro had fallen on Isabella.

No one in that splendid assemblage had noticed Isabella as Don Ramiro saluted Celindja, or it would have been seen how she suddenly was startled and then leaned eagerly forward to catch a further glimpse of the knight.

The first contest at tilting was won, after a severe struggle by the Christian knight. The Moors were amazed at the skill and valor of their adversary, and

the novel style of defence he introduced. They could not restrain their admiration; and in spite of their mortification, shouts of approval and bursts of applause filled the arena, whose walls echoed and re-echoed them. But none of these things did Isabella see. The shouts of admiration fell dead on her ears, for the favorite slave of Celindja had fallen in a swoon upon the floor.

II

THE festivities and games lasted for a week. At the end of that time much jealousy of the Christian knight had arisen, first because he was nearly always victorious in the lists, and secondly, because Isabella showed such interest in the stranger. Many a Moorish chieftain returned to his home with broken lance and wounded body, vowing vengeance upon the man who had overcome him.

The last day came, when the victors in the games were to be honored with scarves bestowed by the fairest of the fair. Isabella, as usual, stood behind her mistress, but was dressed so richly that even Azarque stared. She wore a beautiful amber-colored silk, em-

broidered all over with pink almond flowers, and jewels flashed from her neck and arms. Her eyes were brilliant as stars, and her cheeks bright with color. No one in Celindja's train had ever seen the Aragonese slave so beautiful as she was that day.

After the procession, the Moorish chiefs, jealous that the Aragonese knight should carry away any of the honors they deemed due to themselves, begged the king for a last test of Don Ramiro's skill. He must succeed in picking up a bracelet with his spear three times running, while riding at full gallop round the arena.

Don Ramiro paused a moment before agreeing to this request, but at last consented to the new trial on condition that he should have the bracelet of Isabella, the Christian slave. Celindja and her attendants were angry at this stipulation, and looked at Isabella with jealousy and hatred in their hearts. She, however, calmly and haughtily unclasped a heavy bracelet from her arm, and handed it to her mistress to give to Don Ramiro.

The Aragonese knight rode three times round the arena at full gallop, and each time picked up the bracelet with the utmost ease. Even the Moors themselves could not have done it with more perfect grace and

skill, and they forgot their jealousy and rage in admiration of the wonderful horsemanship of their adversary. When the knight came with the other victors to receive his scarf, Celindja was so delighted with his adroitness and skill that almost involuntarily she took her sash from her waist, and handing it to Isabella, said, "As you are of his race, give it to him."

But Isabella had been too quick for her. Like a flash she had unfastened and given her own sash to the victor, which, curiously enough, matched the one he wore across his breast. At the moment that he received the scarf he returned the bracelet. The Christian slave clasped the bracelet on her arm with apparent disdain, but her heart was bounding and leaping within her, for in the hollow of her bracelet she had seen a folded paper.

III

THE tournaments were at an end. The feasts, however, kept on late into the night, and Don Ramiro was fêted with true Eastern hospitality. The populace haunted the streets till the small hours, anxious to catch a glimpse, if only for a moment, of the splendid trap-

pings of the horses and the beautiful dresses of their riders when the festivities should have ceased. But all things come to an end, and gradually everything was still in the old Moorish city.

The quiet, crooked streets lay in tranquil silence, when suddenly was heard the muffled tread of horses' feet coming from the direction of the Alcazar. The night was dark with the moon just rising, sending a ghostly light through the clouds which rose on either side, scudding rapidly away towards the east. Once in a while a gleam of light fell upon the armor of three horsemen who were quietly, almost stealthily, passing through the deserted and silent streets. When they came to the Puerta del Cambron the sentinels were all asleep. With as little noise as possible, the slightest of the three horsemen unbarred the gates, and shutting everything carefully behind him again mounted his horse. Away the three went, racing on their swift steeds over mountain and valley until they were safe from pursuit.

"Can you hold such a pace?" the leader anxiously asked.

"I can do anything that will keep me near you," was

the answer in a rich sweet voice, "anything that will free me from that hated slavery."

"Did you think I had forgotten you in captivity among the Moors?" whispered Don Ramiro.

"I hardly dared to hope," Isabella whispered in return. "After so many years it was hard to believe that any of my own kindred remembered my existence."

"Do you remember the almond blossom which you gave me long ago? You said then that it was the emblem of fidelity. Ever afterwards I wore a spray. I had no idea whither you had been carried; but I vowed that wherever it might be, you should see the emblem of our troth."

"Fidelity is after all the peace of life," she answered.

For days and days they journeyed—Don Ramiro and his two followers, Isabella, the slender page, riding as hard and faring as roughly as her companions. Once over the Moorish frontier, however, Don Ramiro made several halts to rest his companions, especially Isabella, who was treated with all the chivalry and deference imaginable. For had she not been betrothed to Don Ramiro when they were mere babies? And had he

not rescued her from slavery, that fate worse than death?

At last after many days of hard riding they came to Saragossa. As soon as the people knew that the Beauty of Saragossa was once more among them, the whole city was decorated with flags, while brilliant brocades and embroideries were hung from the balconies. Bells rang joyfully throughout the city, and all the people thronged the streets, rejoicing at the return of Isabella.

HOW BLANCA THE HAUGHTY BECAME GENTLE

THE Count of Tolosa had a beautiful daughter called Blanca. He had promised her in marriage to the son of the Count of Barcelona. Both were young, rich and noble. All the people from both provinces gathered together to celebrate the wedding.

Blanca was very self-willed. She had always had everything her own way. She lived in a noble Palace in the midst of enchanting country. There were many servitors to obey her commands, and many knights had contended for her favor. She seemed to believe that the whole earth and all who lived in it were made for her pleasure, and that all must conform to her desires. Nothing was ever good enough to please her.

Her father had hoped that she would grow out of these foolish ways when she became older and wiser, and had never corrected her. But she, meanwhile, became even more self-willed, and chose the occasion of her marriage-fête for the wildest of all her pranks.

While all were seated in the great hall of the Castle at the banquet, and all lips were sounding her praises, perhaps also with envy at her happiness, the young Count, offering her a basket of rich fruits, proposed to divide with her a fine pomegranate. Blanca condescended to give him permission. The Count with all his dexterity could not avoid letting one of the luscious ruby pips fall upon the table. Then, as if ashamed to leave a spot before her eyes as an evidence of his awkwardness, he hastily picked up the pip and put it to his mouth.

All the morning Blanca had been vainly looking for some pretext to quarrel, and immediately caught at this one. She exclaimed that she would never be bound to such a parsimonious husband. It was an act unworthy of a noble! A man who was afraid of losing the value of a pomegranate pip must be a sorry mate indeed! He would not do for her!

In vain, the young Count tried to explain how false

was the view she had taken. Equally in vain, her father reasoned with her on the childishness of her conduct, and her companions pleaded in favor of the bridegroom. Blanca would not listen to reason, and the poor young Count found himself at last left alone, an object of the derision, or pity, of the whole assembly.

He really loved Blanca, and had before this day put up with her many caprices out of affection for her. But this last was not only a tax on his patience and good temper, but an affront on his name and lineage, and could not be borne. And yet he loved Blanca too much to resort to any act which might put a further barrier between them. Uncertain how to act, he went out and rode away, spurring his horse, not caring whither he rode, if only he could go far away from his fellowmen and muse over his grief. But all the time there ran ringing in his head:

No more a noble count, I trow,
A humble shepherd seem I now!

He could not think what the lines meant. He rode on and on until he reached a distant forest, where all was savage and wild, and where there was nothing to

remind him of the unhappy scene through which he had passed. There he alighted from his good steed, and threw himself on the hard ground. The sword which he had been wont to raise so bravely against the enemies of his country now clanked listlessly by his side, the sharp rocks cut his cheeks, and his noble blood flowed from the wounds. But he felt them not, for his heart bled with other and deeper wounds; and all the time there ran in his head the lines:

No more a noble count, I trow,
A humble shepherd seem I now!

After he had lain there some time, and the passion of his sorrow had so far cooled that he began to take notice of the objects around him, he observed two milk-white doves perched lovingly side by side on the branches over his head, yet fluttering with fear and trouble. Full of his own suffering, he felt a singular compassion for the two frightened birds. Searching for the cause of their distress, he perceived a great hawk hovering in the air above them, in ever-nearing circles, and with glaring eyes preparing to pounce on his luckless prey.

The Count at once understood their danger, and

picking up a stone, threw it with such force and aim, that it brought down the greedy hawk dead to the ground. The doves no sooner found themselves delivered from their pursuer, than they gave every token of gladness and delight, hopping from branch to branch, fluttering away and pursuing each other, and then again nestling against each other in the gentlest way.

The Count could not bear to see their happiness, it reminded him of his loss; so he arose and wandered on into a dark cave where he could see nothing. There he lay down; and the lines running in his head lulled him to sleep:

No more a noble count, I trow,
A humble shepherd seem I now!

Then in his dream he saw one of the doves appear to him in the form of a beautiful woman; her face was like the sky at sunrise, of the softest pink and white, and her eyes were so bright and lustrous that they illumined the whole cave.

"Caballero, Caballero!" said the bright vision; "you do not recognize me, nevertheless, I am indeed one of those poor doves whose lives you but now saved from

the wicked hawk; and if I and my mate live for each other, it is to you we owe the boon. I have come to pay the debt we owe you, and I know there is only one way in which I can do it. That is by telling you how to win Blanca, for whose sake you are now so sad. I promise you that in a very little time you shall have it all your own way, and that she shall become as humble as she is now haughty. Meanwhile, take this Ring, which I have enchanted for you. Whatever you ask of it, it will do for you."

Then the beautiful vision disappeared, and the cave immediately became dark and gloomy as before.

The moment the Count awoke, the memory of his vision rose up before him, and he lost no time in seeing whether he had the Ring safe. There it was on his finger; and when he felt it, he put his confidence in the promise of the vision, and hastened out of the cave. He had no sooner found his way again into the daylight, than he took off his Ring, and thus addressed it:

"*Aniellico, aniellico!* now is the time come to show your devotion to me. You know how Blanca has scorned me, and how I fear to go near her again, lest she should in her wilfulness put some fresh affront

"Take This Ring Which I Have Enchanted for You"

upon me. Yet I cannot bear to stay away from her. Tell me, Ring, what I must do."

"Attend, attend," answered the Ring; "watch now what you see passing before your eyes."

As the Ring spoke, the Count saw a moor-hen scudding away across the plain, and as fast as he could a cock following after her. The hen seemed determined to have nothing to say to the cock; but he was so persevering that he soon came up to her. He made her stand still and listen to him. Then he knocked her about a good deal, and then soothed her down. At last they went off together amicably; and the Ring sang:

The cock o'ercomes, though somewhat rough,
So man, no less, the coy rebuff
Of woman!

"I see what you mean," said the Count, "but I do not at all know how I can carry out your plan."

"Leave that to me," said the Ring; "only do as I advise you. According to the instructions of my lady, the dove, I will give you all you wish. But now, you must take off your fine armor and all your noble dress, and put on this disguise of a shepherd. Then take this loom, as if you were going, like the poor shepherd, to

weave the wool of your flock. Now come along."

Then, as they went along together, the Ring told him all that he was to do, and what to say. It had hardly completed its instructions when they arrived at the gate of the gardens of the Count of Tolosa.

A gruff old gardener came out to see who called. When he saw it was only a country bumpkin of a shepherd, he was gruffer than ever, and bade him begone.

"Gardener, gardener!" said the disguised Count, "do you not think, if you were to let me help you, that you would get through your work much more easily? You have a hard time of it, and have little rest. I am young and strong, and should soon accomplish what you have to do, and then you need not turn out so early in the morning, nor sit up so late at night watching this gate."

"Pastorcillo, pastorcillo!" rejoined the old gardener, quite tamed by this appeal, "I cannot say nay to such an offer; so come in."

The Count lost no time in obeying. At once he began fulfilling his promise, by taking the sheep out of the fold and leading them to pasture. In doing this,

he took care to direct them straight towards the windows of the palace. Arrived there, he sat down and placed his loom, and began weaving diligently after the manner of poor shepherds, and singing the while:

The cock o'ercomes, though somewhat rough,
So man, no less, the coy rebuff
Of woman!

He had not sat there long, before he observed a postern opening in the wall which separated the castle-keep from the private gardens. How his heart beat! Might it not be Blanca coming out for a walk? No, it was only one of her attendants, who had come to see what the shepherd was weaving.

"Tell me, Don Villano," she cried, as she neared him, "what kind of stuff you are weaving. Is it a heavenly or an earthly texture?"

"It is a stuff much too fine for such as you. It is a fabric that has not its like in all the world. It cannot be bartered for cloth of gold; for whoever wears this stuff, however old she may be, immediately appears young, and if already young, it makes her beautiful too."

And then he went on weaving, without paying any attention to her, as if he did not see her, or hear her questions or entreaties. And he kept singing the while:

The cock o'ercomes, though somewhat rough,
So man, no less, the coy rebuff
Of woman!

When the duena found she could make no impression on him off she ran to call Blanca, who was not yet out of bed. Long before she got within hearing, she cried:

"Infantina, Infantina! get up and come down quickly, for here in your garden is a shepherd. He is weaving a stuff which cannot be matched in all the world. It cannot be bartered for cloth of gold; for whoever puts on a garment made of it will instantly appear young, however old she may have been before; and if she is already young and beautiful, it will make her much more so."

Now the waiting-maid, it must be observed, was neither young nor pretty, and she longed to get possession

of the cloth. But as the shepherd would not give it to her, she hoped to make her young mistress buy it from him.

Blanca's curiosity was sufficiently aroused by the duena, to rise in all haste and come down into the garden to see the strange shepherd herself.

The Count's heart beat hard indeed, as she came near. She looked so handsome and so haughty, that the sight brought back the memory of all her cruelty, and he was divided between the desire to throw himself at her feet and the resolve to follow the advice of the Ring. But the Ring admonished him to keep quiet, and not even look up at her.

"God be with you, this morning, villano!" exclaimed Blanca rather loudly, with a little sharp cough, to attract his attention.

"May He have you in His good keeping, nina!" answered the shepherd, without looking up from his loom.

Blanca was not accustomed to such treatment and she felt much inclined to call her servants to chastise him for his rudeness. Nevertheless, there was something about his manner that awed as well as interested

her far too much for her to give up trying to solve the mystery that surrounded him.

"Villano, villano!" she said at last, "tell me, I pray, what tissue you are weaving, and who taught you to weave it.

"I suppose you want to sell it, villano," continued Blanca, trying not to look vexed. "Now if you like, I will buy it of you. You may ask what you like; money, or jewels, whatever you will. I will pay the price."

And when she had said this, she thought such bait sufficient.

But far from it! He drew himself up proudly, and told her that all her money and jewels were useless to him; that whoever makes up his mind to condemn riches is richer than all the world. That he who is content with the food and raiment earned by his daily toil cannot be bribed by gold.

"But," continued he, speaking a little lower and more softly, "there is one condition on which I shall part with my fine weft, and only one. The woman to whom I give it must be my wife!"

And then he resumed his indifferent manner again, and went on weaving, and singing the while:

The cock o'ercomes, though somewhat rough,
So man, no less, the coy rebuff
Of woman!

Blanca seemed riveted to the spot. She had mourned the Count of Barcelona quite in secret and in silence, and often her heart was—of course quite in secret and in silence—cut to the quick with the thought, "Suppose he should never come back to me!"

Though she appeared outwardly gay and haughty as before, this care continually preyed on her mind. She treasured up, quite in secret and in silence, every little thing that could remind her of him. Whenever a stranger came to her father's castle, though she pretended scarcely to look at him, she hoped he might be the bearer of tidings from the absent Count.

Now there was something about the shepherd that reawakened all her sorrows and all her hopes. She did not know what it was. She was too agitated to suspect that it was the young Count himself, yet she felt so drawn towards him, she could not tear herself away.

The audacity of such words was great, however, coming from one in his humble garb; and she felt she

must reprove him severely. So assuming a show of great indignation, she turned away, exclaiming:

"Begone, villano! nor dare approach me. If you come but one step nearer, I will call my father's men to kill you!"

"Sopervica, Sopervica!" replied the shepherd with most provoking coolness. "You are very proud now; but I swear to you that you will not always take that tone. You will talk to me very differently some day. For so I have been promised when I was taught the song:

The cock o'ercomes, though somewhat rough,
So man, no less, the coy rebuff
Of woman!

The duena, who had been standing by, watching this scene with the greatest anxiety, intent only on gaining possession of the tissue which was to make her young and beautiful, was driven beyond endurance by the turn matters were now taking. So she called her young mistress aside and talked so earnestly of the incomparable powers of the cloth and the little probability of ever again meeting with such a chance if she neglected this one.

She threw in, too, clever hints about easy ways of surmounting the difficulty; the simple shepherd could easily be deceived; Blanca could pretend to listen to his suit, though it need only be pretence, and in the meantime she would get his priceless treasure away from him. Poor little Blanca was quite bewildered!

She was, indeed, so anxious to see more of the mysterious shepherd, and so possessed with the vague fancy that there was some connection between him and the Count of Barcelona, that it was no very difficult matter to overcome her scruples, particularly as the duena promised to smooth the way for her.

The Count, who had also been a little frightened, lest he had spoken too rudely was quite willing to receive the duena's mediation, and in a very little time Blanca had obtained possession of the texture. But the Count had also played his game so successfully, that Blanca could think and dream of nothing but him, nor rest till she had the opportunity of meeting him again. Of course this was not difficult, and the duena was ready enough to assist her, as she thought the shepherd might have some other precious gift.

Nor was she mistaken. The Count consulted his Ring as to what he should do next, and the Ring gave

him a fowl which laid pearls for eggs, and the chickens that came out of them had feathers of gold.

When Blanca saw this, she could not forbear coming down into the garden to ask for the beautiful fowl. The shepherd was feeding her with gold corn, and he went on throwing down the grains without taking any notice of Blanca's approach, but singing:

My fair begins to yield;
I'm safe to win the field!

"Pastorcillo, pastorcillo! give me the beautiful fowl!" said Blanca imploringly. "I should so like to have her. I shall cry if you will not give her to me," she continued. But the Count turned on his heel, and continued singing:

My fair begins to yield;
I'm safe to win the field!

"Pastorcillo! listen," cried Blanca sadly, for though she did not recognize the Count, he had so enthralled her, that she felt towards the supposed shepherd as she had never felt towards any other.

"Oh, cease that horrid song, and speak to me," she

said at last, but so humbly, that the Count thought it time to put in a word.

"Will you come away with me?" he said, somewhat abruptly.

"Never!" retorted Blanca, indignantly. "You had better take care, and not talk so, for if my father should overhear you, he would have you strung up."

But the shepherd did not care a bit. In the meantime he had spoken to her father, and told him his plan. The Count of Tolosa had given hearty approval to this scheme for bringing his unruly daughter to reason; and the shepherd now sang out louder than before:

My fair begins to yield;
I'm safe to win the field!

Never before had Blanca been treated in this way, and she knew not what to make of it. She turned to go away, but dread stole over her, suppose the shepherd should leave as mysteriously as he had come. Then there would be no one left to remind her of the Count. She could not bear to think of it; so she turned, and said faintly:

"Pastorcillo! give me the beautiful fowl. You must give it me!"

"I am going away, Blanca," he replied, but less sternly than before. It was the first time that he had called her by name, and it seemed as if she heard the Count speaking.

"Going away!" she exclaimed, in despair. "Oh you must take me with you!"

"Take you with me!" repeated the shepherd. "No, you said you would not come."

"Oh, but I did not know what I was saying!"

"It is too late now," replied the Count.

"Oh, but I shall come, whether you will or no," said she, for every time he spoke his words seemed to rivet more firmly the spell which bound her.

"I cannot help it, if you choose to do that," was his answer, and he turned to go.

"Take me, Pastorcillo!" she said once more.

"You would not like to come where I have to go," answered the supposed shepherd. "My dwelling is a dark cave, where no light ever enters. My bed is the sharp rock, which cuts through to the bones. My drink is water, muddy and cold; and my meat is grief

and mourning. No companions are there where I live, for all men and women hold my way of living in dread."

When Blanca heard this, she turned pale; nevertheless, she could not see him go without her, and again asked him to take her. But the shepherd walked away without saying a word. Blanca followed him as if drawn by magic.

Away they went, sad and silent: far, far away, over rocks, past streams and torrents, through briars and brakes. For months they wandered thus; the Count going on before, Blanca, sad and silent, after him. They never entered any town, and their only food was the berries they found in the wood, and the water of the brooks they crossed. Blanca's fair soft skin was burnt brown by the sun and parched by the wind. Her hands were torn by the thorns, and her feet bleeding from the stones in the way. At last came a day when she could go no farther. Fainting she sank down on the earth, but she did not so much as utter a word of complaint.

"What is the matter, Blanca!" inquired the Count. "Do you give up following me further?"

"Pastorcillo! mock me not. You see I would follow you gladly, but my strength is at an end. I can go no farther"; and with that her senses failed.

Then the Count took pity on her, and lifting her in his arms, carried her to a shepherd's hut which stood at no great distance upon the moor. There the good wife attended her, putting Blanca in her poor bed, and gently trying to revive her. But it was all of no use, she continued in the swoon, and the poor peasant's restoratives were of no avail.

When the Count saw this, he was in despair, and sitting down under shadow of a rock, he took out his Ring to ask what was now to be done, being almost ready to reproach it for having advised him to be so cruel.

But the Ring told him to be of good heart, that all the promises of the milk-white dove would be fulfilled.

"Blanca has now learned a lesson, which she will not forget. And besides, after she has given such strong proofs of love and devotion towards you, she will have no inclination to resume the provoking ways with which she tormented you before, so you may safely discover yourself to her now."

Then the good Ring suddenly sang a charm and the peasant's hut became a great palace, and the bed on

which Blanca was lying was covered with beautiful embroidered coverlets. All around were beautiful clothes for a countess to wear. The Count, too, was provided with a shining suit of armor, a prancing charger, and noble knights and ladies to attend them. Over Blanca, too, the Ring spoke a charm, and consciousness came back to her.

When she saw the Count standing by her side, looking just as he had the day he dropped the pomegranate pip, it seemed as if she had never seen him in any other garb. But he sang a verse the Ring had taught him:

She spurned her bridegroom, in her pride!
Then with a shepherd would abide;
Yet loved me still, for I have tried
Her love, as gold is purified!

She begged him not to sing it, but so gently, that he could not refuse. Then he lifted her on to her palfrey, and the whole noble train moved on towards his father's palace, where the marriage was celebrated with great rejoicing.

THE TREASURE OF CARDONA

ONCE there was a worthy hidalgo named Don Pedro Gonzales de Orrego. His ancestors had held high positions at Court, an expensive honor, so ruinous to the family fortunes that Don Pedro had been obliged to let his palace in Madrid and to withdraw from public life to his *casa de campo,* the summer residence of the Orregos.

It was a large weather-beaten dwelling, full of faded splendor but very pleasant, for though the *patio* opened on a neglected garden the view of the mountains was noble, and the strong air as good as the wine of Valdepeñas.

Don Pedro's household consisted of two servants: José, an old man leaner than a heron, and Teresa, a

stout, honest country woman, whose brown face pitted with small-pox rivalled in roughness, texture, and color the stone of the walls where the plaster had decayed.

The hidalgo himself was a lank, locust-like man nearing fifty. It was said that his sharp-featured countenance might well have served as a model for the masks carved on the walnut choir stalls in the church at Fuentes. He was a grave, kind-hearted, though sharp-tongued gentleman, who spent his days either in the coolness of his sombre library, or riding about the country on Febo, a horse so shadowy that he seemed a mere drying-frame for leather. Nevertheless, lean as were both horse and master, the fiery spirit within them gave them a vigor that seemed to defy Time.

The household fare was of the simplest. Bread and olives, *gazpacho,* or bread mixed with oil and vinegar and seasoned with onions; a dish of beans; a *puchero,* or stew; a fowl, and, occasionally, a bit of pork, or an Estremadura sausage.

One day in winter, José was caught by an icy wind that killed him as neatly as a knife thrust through the lungs. Don Pedro, grieved at the loss of his faithful attendant, was unwilling to replace him; but to this

Teresa would not consent, protesting that, single-handed, she would find the work too heavy.

The truth was that she had a nephew, some twenty years old, Pepito Valera by name, a good creature but so simple that he hardly knew which was the right end of a spade. The poor fellow could not keep any situation, and gossips were still chuckling over the tale of his last failure.

He had been employed as a coachman to an old lady of noble family, but who was exceedingly ill-favored. One morning Pepito had appeared before his mistress with the request that he be excused from driving her anywhere outside the estate.

"And, pray, why so?" the lady had asked.

"Because, Your Worship, everybody keeps asking me when I am next going to drive you out to scare the birds. As I am so attached to Your Worship, this is a jest too painful for me to endure!"

This was the fellow whom Teresa persuaded her easy-going master to put in José's place!

Pepito's arrival was marked by disaster, for on the very first morning he dropped a dish of beans on the floor of the kitchen. When Teresa's reproaches had died down and Pepito brought in another course, Don

Pedro asked him how the misfortune had happened.

"It slipped from my hands like this, Your Excellency," answered the simpleton, letting the dish glide from his grasp with so frank a smile that the hidalgo was more perplexed than angry.

It is true that he debated with the horrified Teresa whether, henceforth, it might not be better to eat off wood or pewter, but as Pepito, soundly cuffed by his aunt, promised to be more careful, the offence was passed over, and save for occasional disasters to the crockery and furniture, things went off smoothly enough. Nevertheless, the lad's unbelievable simplicity often tried his master almost beyond endurance, and grew to be a legend that, for many generations, fed the laughter of the country-side.

It is recorded that on one occasion a marquis, whose friendship Don Pedro valued, came to dine. The guest was famous for his hearty appetite, and Pepito, thinking his master would be stinted of his share of a favorite dish, helped the hidalgo bountifully. When the marquis had cleared his plate, Pepito asked him whether he would like another helping.

"By all means!" was the answer. "The dish is excellent!"

"Well, there is none left!" said Pepito, eyeing his master's well-filled platter with such uncouth and shameless joy that Don Pedro lost his relish, and the marquis good-naturedly burst out laughing.

No scolding seemed to impress Pepito with a sense of guilt for this or for similar offences, because, as he said to Teresa, Don Pedro was too kindly and allowed himself to be imposed on.

As for the hidalgo, the servant's faults were amply redeemed by the fact that the poor lad was "as good as bread," nor could any one have been more devoted. His zeal was indeed often as troublesome as his folly. Thus, time after time, when Don Pedro was trying to take his siesta in the *patio,* Pepito insisted on standing by him fanning away the flies with such energy that he also chased away sleep.

For some years the hidalgo had been occupying himself with the re-arrangement of his library, a large, though old-fashioned collection, in which with the joy of an explorer he continually discovered many curious books. Among these was a copy of the *Chronicles of the Cid,* a choice and richly illuminated manuscript that delighted Don Pedro. He was for ever reading it, and presently he observed in it certain strange marks

which on examination proved to be a cipher of a very ingenious kind. Don Pedro applied himself to the task of solving it, and was astonished to find that it contained information regarding a Treasure, hidden near Fuentes, about a century before, by a certain Alfonso Cisneros.

This man, a great lover of the ancient chronicles, having no heirs, had hit on the odd plan of burying his money in the ruined Castle of Cardona, near Fuentes, for the benefit of any one who should love the *Chronicles of the Cid* enough to read it attentively, and also be sufficiently ingenious to discover the guiding cipher.

No sooner had Don Pedro made this discovery than he was tormented by fear that the Treasure had already been unearthed, or that some one might forestall him. He felt he must settle the doubt without delay, so calling Pepito he said to him:

"Go to Sancho, the inn-keeper, and hire from him, in my name, his big mule, Testarudo. Praise be to Heaven you know how to cling fast, if not gracefully, to a saddle! Should Testarudo be out on hire, bring that ungainly brute, El Moro. One thing is essential I must have a strong beast here by this evening."

Within an hour the anxious hidalgo heard the sound

of hoofs, sweeter to him than heavenly music. He rushed out to welcome Pepito, who crouched uneasily astride a huge sombre mule, powerful in the body, long in the ear, and continually gathering its loose lips in a cynical grin.

Don Pedro joyfully caressed the sinister animal, saying: "Put him in the stall furthest from Febo. Tie him up well, and give both animals a plentiful feed of oats, for there is some hard work forward. This evening I shall give you further instructions."

About sundown the hidalgo took his meal in the courtyard. The twilight was sultry and windless, the scent of the jessamine trained on the pillars of the *patio* sweetened the air and mingled with the spicy odors from the carnations and heliotrope bushes set in large earthern pots at the entrance of the garden.

Don Pedro trifled with his food, then bidding Pepito light a lantern he went to the stable, where he carefully examined the animals and their riding equipment. After this he fetched out saddle-bags, in which he ordered the astonished Teresa to pack ham, cheese, olives, bread, and a good supply of wine stored, after the Aragonese fashion, in a small goat-skin. The housekeep-

er's tongue was moist with questions, but her master's manner daunted her curiosity.

Don Pedro then bade Pepito bring down morion, breastplate, sword and pistols. The loading and priming of the firearms was carefully done. Then he told the lad to fetch a dark lantern, and to wrap it carefully in a sack, along with a spade, a pickaxe and a small crowbar.

When everything was ready and collected in the dining-room, Don Pedro wiped the sweat off his face, and beckoning silently to Pepito, led the way to the far end of the garden. Here, seated in the warm twilight on the edge of a stone tank from which a conduit led the water to a fountain, now half dry and overgrown with maidenhair fern, the hidalgo said:

"Pepito, to-morrow morning betimes we shall travel to Fuentes, near which place rises a hill topped by the ruined Castle of Cardona. Somewhere in that building I hope to find a number of valuable objects left by a man who hid them there many years ago. We shall start early in the morning, proceed at leisure, sleep at the inn of the Three Stars just outside Torre Vieja, and, on the next day, reach Cardona about sunset. It

is important that my journey and its purpose should be kept secret. Do not speak of these things, therefore; and, in particular, say nothing to your aunt, a very good woman, indeed a perfect woman in more senses than one, who, as she cannot write, could be relied on to keep a secret if her tongue were removed.

"As the expedition will be fatiguing, it is necessary that we should both take our fill of sleep, for we must be early afoot. Do not fail, I beg you, to call me at four, so that we may ride in the cool and rest in the heat of the day. It is now ten o'clock, and I shall retire to my room. That is all; but, on your life, remember two things! Say nothing to any living soul, whether aunt or otherwise, and call me at four in the morning. You will have no difficulty in doing this, for, as I know to my cost, you are always astir before the birds."

When his master had retired, the luckless Pepito, flustered by the unusual events of the day, and oppressed by his responsibility, felt he could not and must not sleep. Therefore, when with great difficulty he had shaken off his aunt, he placed a straw-seated chair in the *patio,* and sat down wrapped in a cloak to wait for dawn.

He was so worried that about one hour later the

watchful Teresa caught him creeping upstairs in his stockings, with a lighted taper in his hand.

"What are you doing in your stocking feet?" she asked.

"Hush! Hush! Aunt," whispered Pepito. "I must wake Don Pedro to consult him about some orders he gave me, and I have taken off my shoes not to make a noise. For the love of Heaven, don't stand talking there so loudly."

Presently Don Pedro's sleep was broken by a patient stealthy knocking at the door. "What is it?" he asked testily.

"Pardon, Your Excellency, but I wished to be certain. Did you say four o'clock, or five?"

The hidalgo shouted: "Heaven pardon my folly, I thought that I had made everything clear. Listen, mooncalf! Observe, you walking bolster! I said four o'clock! At four o'clock! Mark me! Four; one less than the fingers of your hand. And now, O Paragon of Wit, as you hope to be saved, let me rest in peace!"

But the good gentleman had not long been asleep when he was disturbed by the noise of continued coughing without, followed by the sound of his name whis-

pered anxiously through the keyhole. Stifling his rage, he cried out: "What now? Is it four o'clock?"

"No, Your Excellency, not yet. Sleep on. But pray tell me, what suit would it please you to wear on the journey, that I may lay it out ready against the morning, so that you will lose no time in dressing."

"O Child of Perdition, son of a pumpkin and of a marrow!" shouted Don Pedro. "Is it for that you have troubled me? I will wear the suit I have by me on the chair! Begone, you mother's tragedy, and do not disturb me again till four. You are worse than the officious cock that every night wakes me with his din. Pray Heaven you have not killed sleep for me!"

Sleep came, however, to Don Pedro, and so sound a sleep that it grieved him to be drawn from it by an outrageous uproar in the *patio* below.

"A fox in the hen-roost!" thought the hidalgo. Opening the window wide, he looked out. The noise came from the chicken-run at the entrance of the garden. On the ground, near the door of the hen-house, stood a lighted lantern, and by its glimmer the nobleman saw his servant moving actively within.

"Pepito!" he shouted. "Pepito! Have you got him? Shall I come down and help you?"

Pepito came slowly out of the run. Under his arm he held something that struggled in the folds of a cloth.

"Pardon me, if I have again disturbed Your Excellency! I feared the cock might wake you, so I have caught him and tied up his beak. He will not be able to crow now."

Don Pedro left the window, then reappeared leaning over the sill with nothing but his shirt between him and the night wind. A long and heavy horsewhip trembled in his right hand.

"Come hither, Pepito!" he said, in a voice chill as the dew. "Come hither! Hold up the lantern. So, that will do! Now, you burglar of my peace, foolish gosling hatched from an addled egg, you tortoise-witted knave, sent to afflict me for my sins; tell me, you thick-headed night-owl, do you observe this whip? You do? Mark me, then! If for any reason whatever you wake me again before the appointed time, I will so lace you with it that your shoulders shall resemble those of the blessed Saint Lawrence on his gridiron."

When Don Pedro had withdrawn, Pepito, hardly daring to breathe, sat still on his chair, aghast. Above him the summer night sky of Spain was ablaze with large bright stars, hanging from the heavens in clus-

ters of fire. The air was full of dewy radiance, whose sweet scent was as penetrating as that of the fragrant jessamine, twined pale about the pillars of the *patio*. The poor fellow was downcast and tormented by many things about which he still yearned to question his master had he dared to wake him.

Slowly a plan formed in that dull mind. As he had broken Don Pedro's rest he must let the hidalgo take his fill of sleep. In the meantime he himself would ride ahead on Testarudo. If he pressed forward he could reach Cardona by nightfall, one day in advance, and guard the place till Don Pedro arrived.

There was no time to lose. Chuckling with delight at his ingenuity, Pepito softly led out the big mule and tied to the saddle-bow the sack containing the tools, together with one of the provision bags. After this he went up to his aunt's room and, putting his hand over her mouth, told her in whispers to wake Don Pedro at seven, and to inform the hidalgo that he, Pepito, had ridden full speed ahead to keep watch at the place appointed.

Having repeated his instructions with such horrid threats in the event of disobedience that the dazed woman thought her nephew had gone mad, Pepito left

her. A few moments after she heard the sound of stealthy hoofs die away in the night silence.

Next morning when the housekeeper roused Don Pedro and gave him Pepito's message, the hidalgo's fury was unmeasured. Locked in her room Teresa prayed earnestly to the saints for protection against the evil and profane spirit that had entered into her master. As she prayed the rattle of hoofs drew her to the window, and she saw the hidalgo gallop off furiously in the sunshine.

All day Don Pedro spurred the wretched Febo along the white roads, under the baking, blinding light. Hour after hour, followed by a flurry of dust, he sped across the great brown plains which quivered in the heat. Far on the horizon jagged mountain peaks stood veiled in haze against the deep, cloudless blue.

Don Pedro clattered through Torre Vieja, trampling stray hen-coops to fragments, among the shrieks of startled old women taking their siesta in the shadow of the brown hovels. He passed Quebrado village, high on its rusty, crumpled rock; forded torrents that in this season were but silvery skeins threading wastes of warm, bleached gravel set between thickets of cane; crossed heaths, crackling in the sun. He did not draw

rein till, about three in the afternoon, drenched with sweat and foul with dust, coming out of the bed of a mountain torrent he saw rising before him, Fuentes, a yellow carving on its cliff, and not far from it the ruins of Cardona tufted with trees. Along the white windings of the road, not a pistol shot ahead, ambled the bulky brown form of Testarudo, to whose back Pepito clung like a performing ape.

At the sound of hoofs the lad looked cautiously round, and, recognizing Don Pedro and his horse, pulled up the contemptuous mule.

Such were the hidalgo's relief and weariness that he chid Pepito very mildly.

Cardona Castle was but half an hour's ride, so they put about and sheltered in the shadows of the ravine. Here, after Don Pedro had washed himself and cleansed his equipment, the two ate and drank heartily, then, lying down in a convenient spot, slept till evening.

When it was cool they rode on, and reached the Castle at sundown. Great ruinous walls girdled the top of the hill. Within the enclosure everything was overgrown with bushes and trees. Tall poplars, like

half-furled flags of green silk, rustled lightly in the evening breeze. The watering tanks were dry and hot as lime-kilns; the conduits themselves all choked with weeds and rubbish.

Don Pedro and Pepito led their beasts to the great tumble-down stables. Vipers glided out at the sound of their footsteps; scorpions with up-curled tails ran round on the flagstones, so that they had to clear the place of vermin before they could leave the animals safely.

By the time they had rubbed them down, fed them, and fetched water for them from a stream, it was dusk. The great plains were purple in the rich twilight; the mountains faint folds of rose touched by the glow of the upper air. Lights glittered golden in the dark mass of Fuentes; faint gleams twinkled overhead, and the earth rang with the crickets' shrill music, sharp and quick as the pulsation of the stars.

Don Pedro told Pepito to light the dark lantern, and they picked their way to the ruins of the castle chapel, through the broken roof of which starlight dripped like fiery dew.

The hidalgo approached the high altar. Behind it,

on the floor, was a huge tombstone adorned with the carving of a knight, whose figure, furred with moss, fixed stern eyes on the searchers.

At the head of the effigy Don Pedro singled out a small, lozenge-shaped stone. By the light of the lantern they probed its edges with the crowbar. The mortar had perished, the iron slipped in, and pressing hard they levered up the slab.

In a hollow beneath lay a casket made of wood, heavily bound with tarnished brass. With trembling hands Don Pedro raised the lid and inside he saw a store of gold coins of many kinds, for the most part Moorish or Arabic. Among them gleamed bars of gold and a number of jewels, loose or set in ornaments.

With great speed they replaced the slab and fled with their find to the stables. They emptied the casket into the provision bag and passed the night under the trees of the garden, not relishing the vermin inside the ruins.

With the first glimmer of dawn they were off, stopping on the way to sink the chest in a deserted pool.

Don Pedro had not hesitated to travel alone about the country with an empty pocket, but the Treasure

at his saddle-bow made him fearful of robbers. He therefore rode down to Fuentes, where he purposed to join a band of merchants, or of carriers, travelling in the direction of his village. As they approached Fuentes they saw several horsemen, followed by a score of laborers, passing at some distance on the way to Cardona Castle, among the ruins of which they were presently seen, moving insect-like with restless activity. The gossip of Fuentes soon revealed to Don Pedro that the Castle had been bought by one of the Osunas. Moreover, that very morning the purchaser had left the inn accompanied by workmen who were to occupy and restore the building. The hidalgo reflected with astonishment that had it not been for his servant's providential folly, he would certainly have lost the Treasure.

Three days later, travelling with a train of Galician carriers, rough but honest fellows, Don Pedro reached home safely with his prize.

By its means he restored the family fortunes. New and more efficient servants were added to the household, but Teresa and her nephew were not dismissed. Though Pepito tried his master's patience no less than

heretofore, all chidings were softened by smiles. At Don Pedro's death he received a legacy that enabled the good fellow to play the fool under his own roof, unreproved, except by his aunt, who shared his leisure and cuffed him along the paths of life.

THE MAGIC PORTRAIT

ONCE, in very ancient times, there lived in Spain a young prince, the Infante Turian. He was a very beautiful youth and the only child of King Canamor and Queen Leonela. Because he was so dear to them, they indulged him too much and he was always allowed to have his own way. Whenever any present or rare and beautiful article was brought to the palace the Prince must have it at once for his own. No one thought of denying his slightest wish.

One day there came to the court a foreign merchant. Instead of travelling with a train of mules heavily laden with a variety of rich wares, he came alone and carried his whole stock in one little parcel wrapped in the folds of his cloak. The servants would have driven

him away without a chance to address himself to the King and Queen, telling him that if he had no more to show than the contents of that one little bundle, they could not be troubled.

In vain the merchant urged the priceless value of the contents of his parcel. He insisted that it was in itself worth all the mule-trains of other merchants put together. But the servants held this for idle raving and harshly bade him begone.

It happened, however, that at this moment, Prince Turian came home and heard the altercation. His curiosity was piqued, he longed to know what could be held so precious. Turian had horses and arms, trappings and gay clothes, games and baubles of every sort, but he was wearied of them all. They had come to him so easily that consequently he held them in slight esteem.

Now here, apparently, was a chance for some quite fresh sensation. The merchant had a strange air which fascinated him; his accent was strange, unlike any that the Prince had heard before. Perhaps he had brought the product of some strange clime. Then, too, Prince Turian liked an opportunity to show his power so he ordered all the palace servants to stand back. Then he

gave the strange merchant permission to open his parcel.

The merchant, however, assuming an air of great mystery, told the Prince that what he had brought could be shown only to the royal eyes. This excited Turian still more. Indeed he was flattered, and bade the servants begone. And as soon as they were quite alone, the strange merchant unfolded the parcel and handed the Prince a portrait. Yes, nothing but a portrait in a very simple frame!

But such a portrait that it quite turned poor Turian's head. He had never dreamed of anything so beautiful. He kissed it and gazed at the lovely face with rapture. Up and down the hall he paced; he raved and grew almost frantic over it.

The strange merchant who had watched him closely at last went to him and said that the time had come when he must leave. He must have the portrait and depart at once.

"Take away the portrait!" cried the Prince. "Indeed, you shall not! Why I will buy it of you at triple, tenfold, even a hundredfold its weight in gold!"

But the merchant answered, "Money cannot buy it, and I require a considerable sum for suffering you to

gaze upon it; but part with it, I cannot, on any condition whatever."

Then Turian, furious at the denial, threw his purse to the merchant. In no measured terms he ordered him to depart while yet the way was clear, otherwise he would have him set upon by the servants from whom he had but just rescued him.

Quietly, the strange merchant picked up the purse. Carefully he counted out the sum he had named as the price for seeing the portrait and then laid the rest aside. He deliberately stowed away the fee in his girdle, but at the same time, took from it, unperceived by the Prince, a little box of powder.

Suddenly turning round, he threw the powder in Turian's face. Instantly the Prince fell insensible. Prepared for the effect of his powder, the merchant caught him in his arms and gently laid him on a divan. Then, taking the portrait, unperceived, he stealthily left the castle.

When Turian regained consciousness, hours afterwards, pursuit of course was vain. No trace could be found of the strange merchant, nor could any one be found who had seen him leave the castle.

The Prince was furious because he had no clue to the

original of the portrait. But there had been no time for inquiry, and when he tried to recall every detail, all that would come back to his mind was, that in the drapery which veiled the form, he had made out, spelled in curious characters, the name *Floreta*. With only this as a guide, he determined to roam the world until he discovered the original of the painting whose beauty so enthralled him.

King Canamor and his Queen were inconsolable that their only son would leave them on so wild an errand. But as they had never taught him obedience or self-control, they could not prevail with him now. All that their entreaty could obtain was his consent to be accompanied by an ancient counsellor of great wisdom and authority in the kingdom. The Conde Dirlos would know how to aid and protect him on land or sea and in whatever enterprise he was minded to take a hand. But the King instructed the Conde not to seek to control him but simply to watch over him, to further his designs in every way and to save him from fatigue and danger.

Turian and the Conde Dirlos wandered for a year and a day, meeting many adventures and were often in great peril. But nowhere could they find any one who

knew the name of Floreta. Wherever they went it was a foreign name. At last—it was just a year from the day that the strange merchant had shown him the portrait—their travels brought them to a steep mountain path, leading down to the sea.

At a turn of the winding road, just below them, appeared a tall figure, wrapped in a long cloak, and wearing a high-peaked hat. Turian jumped with joy. He shouted, "Halt!" and ran down the path. However, the figure paid no heed. "Stop, or you die!" shouted the Prince. At the same time he aimed an arrow at a spot a little in advance of the moving figure.

As if conscious of what was going on, although he did not turn his head, the strange merchant—for the Prince had instantly recognized him—stood still an instant. The arrow rattled in the ground on which he would have stood had he taken three steps forward. Then he passed on unheeding. Turian shouted more madly than before, but to no purpose. In another moment the winding of the road had taken the merchant out of sight.

Madly Turian rushed in pursuit, and reached the turn of the road. No one was to be seen. The rocks now resounded with his cries of fury and his entreaties

to the Magician, for such he now knew him, to stand forth. At last, when the Prince was silent from sheer exhaustion, a low but commanding voice from a nearby cave bade him listen, but as he valued his life, to advance not.

"Speak!" cried the Prince, "nor torture me longer with suspense. What must I do to find Floreta? I am prepared to go to the ends of the earth, to undergo any hardship or torture in the quest. To find her I am determined! If you refuse your help, then in some other way, will I succeed. So you see it is idle to turn a deaf ear."

"By no other help than mine," answered the Magician, "can you find Floreta; your threats are vain. But if I had not wished you to find her, I should not have shown you the portrait, for I knew the strength of its spell. I will tell you how to reach Floreta, but first, must you give me my guerdon."

"Name it! Ask what you will," impetuously cried the Prince. "Ask my kingdom if you like; but keep me not in suspense!"

"I ask only what is reasonable," answered the Magician. "The Princess is worth a thousand-fold her representation."

Then he named a price a thousand times as much as he had asked for the mere glimpse of the portrait. Without replying to the Magician, Turian turned to the Conde Dirlos.

"Now," said he, "is the time to fulfil my father's command to aid me in all ways. Without loss of time raise the money I shall need."

In vain the Conde Dirlos remonstrated. In vain he represented the misery he would inflict on the unhappy people by levying such a large sum in so sudden a manner. But Turian, blind with passion, bade him save his words. Nothing could change his purpose. And as the King's orders to obey Turian had been unconditional, the Conde set out with a heavy heart to raise the vast sum of money.

Ten days of anxious suspense during his absence were spent by the Prince in wandering along the rugged coast. His ardor and excitement grew with the delay. When he was not riding his horse and performing dangerous feats, he sat panting on the topmost crags, searching the country round with eager glance for the first glimpse of the Conde, returning with the means of pursuing his desperate resolve.

The day came at last. Afar off, at first only like so many black specks, but gradually revealing themselves as the Conde Dirlos on his faithful steed, followed by a long file of heavily-laden mules, came the anxiously expected train. And now Turian never left his point of observation. He cursed the sluggish hours, as he watched the train, now steering over the wide expanse of sandy plain, which seemed interminable, unmeasured by landmarks; now toiling backwards and forwards up the zigzagged steep. Provokingly they seemed further off one hour than the last, as at each winding of the road they turned upon their steps; now detached, like spectres against the sky, as they crossed from one reach of the lofty sierra to the next.

All things come to an end, even Turian's anxious suspense. As the Conde at last neared the Magician's cave, Turian descended at break-neck pace to meet him.

"There is the price," said Conde Dirlos, in sad and solemn tones. "But before letting it pass out of your hands, stop and consider again."

As he spoke, he removed from the treasure the brilliant red and yellow coverings, the royal colors of Spain.

"Here, from each province of your father's domain is the due proportion of the tribute you have demanded. See! Will you spend it so?"

Turian darted forward, eager for a glimpse of the goodly store of gold, but drew back in horror. What could he have seen to turn his flushed cheeks so deadly pale?

"Conde Dirlos!" he cried, choking with fury. "What have you brought to mock me? This is not coin. You have brought me tears, burning tears, instead of gold."

"It is all the same," replied the Conde. "I brought the money in this form, that the sight might warn you ere too late, and by its sad horror arrest you. There is time to return it to those from whom it has been wrung, and no harm will have been done. But if you persist, you will find that the Magician will take it for good coin of the realm."

"Quite so!" called the voice from the cave. "It is the money I like best. But I cannot dally thus. If the treasure be not handed over at once, the bargain is at an end, and you shall never hear of me again."

It needed only this to stifle any little spark of pity and misgiving which the old count's judicious strata-

gem might have awakened. So without further loss of time, the Prince called to the Magician to come forth and take the spoil.

He was not slow in complying and taking up a handful of the weird currency from his mule-load the Magician rang it on the rock, where it sounded like the clanking of a captive's chains.

"This is good," said he in a satisfied tone, when he had tried all the coin. "Now for my part of the bargain. I am not of those who fail because I am paid beforehand. You shall find me as good as my word, and even better. I will supply an item of the bargain which you, impetuous youth, never thought to ask for, although it is most important of all. I will not only tell you how to see Floreta, but moreover, will give you the means, whereby you can take her captive and bear her away.

"Nay, interrupt me not," he continued, as Turian, nettled at the exposure of his lack of diplomacy, was about to declare that he had never thought other means than his smile and his strong arm necessary to captivate the Princess. "I have but time to complete my directions. You see yon Castle on a rock out at sea."

As his long bony finger pointed westwards, there

seemed to be traced against the sky, the outline of a royal Castle at about three days' journey. Turian, who had for ten days been beating about the coast, could have sworn it had not been there before. Nevertheless, fascinated by the Magician's commanding manner, he dared say nothing, but murmured assent.

"Then that is your haven. Take ship and steer for it. When you reach the land, throw down this token," and he gave Turian a fine coil of silken chain. "Follow its leading till it brings you to Floreta. If she pleases you, cast it around her and she is yours."

As he spoke he smiled cruelly, and suddenly disappeared from sight, together with the mules and their burden.

Now Turian once more reminded the Conde Dirlos of his father's commands. He bade him provide the swiftest galley on all the coasts of the kingdom and manned with the stoutest oarsmen, that with the utmost speed they might put forth to sea.

If the wise old count had shrunk from the former mission, his horror was but the greater at this one. He reminded the Prince that the King had given his consent to the adventure, but had not contemplated other than a loyal undertaking, such as a noble prince could

entertain with honor. He would never have trusted him on one of this nature.

Turian felt the justice of this reproach, but he lacked the strength of character to command himself. Hurried on by his uncontrollable desire, he bade the old man remember that the command to fulfil his orders was unconditional. No limit had been named.

The count owned that unfortunately this was true. As he could not prevail by argument, he set himself to offset the Prince's headstrong wilfulness by making the journey as safe as possible. He not only insisted on having the galley examined as to its seaworthiness by the most experienced shipwrights and selected the steadiest oarsmen to row, but he held a consultation with all the astronomers of the kingdom to name the day when the Prince might be sure of safe passage, free from winds.

The astronomers declared that the storm just then impending would last ten days. After that there would be ten days of fair weather, and allowing ten days for their preparations, they would have fair weather to make the journey and return in safety.

This delay seemed another age to Turian. Nevertheless he was now so near the accomplishment of his

object that the time passed swiftly enough in the pleasures of anticipation. Conde Dirlos, too, found some relief from his forebodings in the fact that the storm came on at the predicted moment. This gave him confidence that the fair days promised to succeed the storm might surely be counted on.

The fair day came. A shout of admiration rose from the people on the shore as the gallant vessel moved out over the blue sunlit waves, which glittered at each stroke of the countless oars as if showered over with precious stones. And those on board were entranced with the gorgeous sight as they seemed to soar along over the crystal deep. The noble outline of their native mountains, peak above peak, from the verdant slopes where the cattle browsed lazily, to the wild steeps where even the mountain goats could not find footing, receded with every-varying beauty from their sight.

But Turian's eyes were fixed on the Castle out at sea, and his thoughts were all on Floreta. Such confidence had he in the Magician's word, that he had laid his arms aside and held only the silken chain that was to guide him to Floreta. He toyed with it, thinking of how he would throw it around the Princess.

While he was still rapt in these thoughts they drew

near the mysterious shore, and everyone cried out in admiration at the strength and noble proportion of the Castle. But Turian had thought but for the treasure it contained. Springing lightly to land, he lost no time in carrying out the Magician's injunctions and cast down the coil of silken chain.

Slowly it unrolled, and then, wriggling with a serpent's motion, went straight before him to a gate in the Castle wall. It was unlocked. Turian pushed it wide and entered a beautiful garden. At one end was a shaded arbor, and on a bank of perfumed roses Floreta lay asleep.

How his heart beat at the sight! Just as she had appeared in the portrait, just as she had appeared in his dreams, but even more beautiful. Breathless he stood gazing at her, as well he might, for nothing more beautiful was to be found on earth; white as snow and tinted as the fresh rose blooming on its tree.

The Conde Dirlos, fearful of some ambush, marshalled the crew of the galley into a guard and silently followed fast on Turian's heels, to be ready in case of sudden attack. The play of light upon their arms passing in sudden reflection over the scene woke the Prince from his revery and roused him to action. He

cast the silken links around Floreta and such was their charm that though she awoke as the Prince approached, she was powerless to resist or cry out.

Gently Turian lifted her and bore her to the galley, and the men resumed their places at the oars. In silence they pushed off, unperceived by anyone on the island, for it was the hour of noontide rest.

But soon thereafter, Floreta's maidens, coming to attend her found that she had disappeared. The King, her father, and all the people quickly gathered their arms and ran wildly in every direction, till at last they saw the strange galley making fast away. Then they doubted not that it was carrying off their Princess. But they could only stand on the shore, crying out in helpless despair.

Turian had in the meantime removed the silken chain that bound the Princess and thus freed from the enchantment, Floreta held out her arms towards her parents and countrymen and cried piteously to them for help. Turian was unable to quiet her, yet was not willing to give her up.

At first he let Floreta spend herself in lamentations; but when the good galley had put sufficient distance between itself and the Castle, Turian commanded his

people to cast anchor that he might try to console her.

And indeed, it was not long before his sweet words of admiration and his avowals of affection and devotion seemed to reconcile the Princess. Before long they were good friends and the Princess smiled and chatted gaily. The sun shone and the sea sparkled; all nature smiled and everything seemed fair and bright.

But the old count's heart was heavy with foreboding. True enough, there were still several days of the promised fair weather before them, but he knew he should never rest in peace until he had his charge safe again at home. He urged the Prince to give the order to get under way and glad was he to feel the galley again moving towards port in good time to reach home before the next storm.

But, it may rain with a clear sky, and while they were singing and making merry, and dancing to please Floreta, the sky suddenly became overcast and a wind sprang up. High dashed the waves against the bulwarks, and instead of being able to row the vessel into port, the oarsmen could hardly keep their seats. Then in the midst of their fright and horror and piteous cries for help, an ancient seaman stood up. Having commanded silence he harangued the crew.

"This strange maid on board the ship has endangered all our lives. This tempest has been sent because of her, and will not abate unless we cast her overboard. If you would save your lives, defy the Prince and cast the maiden into the sea."

The danger was indeed apparent to all on board, so the old mariner found a willing audience. The Conde, in dismay at the turn events had taken, had but time to rush in to Turian and warn him of the mutiny before the angry seamen burst into his presence. For a moment they were filled with pity at the sight of the beauty and distress of Floreta, and checked by Turian's agonized assurance that the fearful sacrifice would have no effect upon the storm. But the ancient mariner's voice overruled their hesitation and rendered them as pitiless as the winter blast.

Then at the command of the ancient seaman they tried to take Floreta from the arms of the Prince, but he enfolded her more closely, declaring that they should not destroy her without him, and that he would go down into the deep with her. Then they bound him fast, hand and foot, and took Floreta, too terrified to resist or cry, to throw her into the raging sea.

But the old count, ever ready to counsel a middle course, prevailed on them, instead of committing her to the sea to set her upon an island past which the galley was drifting. Turian thought that he should be able to induce them to go back for her as soon as the fury of the storm was spent.

The ancient man of the sea knew what was in his mind and that the work was but half done. He inveighed against the half-measure and predicted that the storm would not abate. But it was now too late. They had been carried far past the island where they had left Floreta, and it was beyond their strength to turn back in the raging, rolling sea, to fulfil the cruel purpose.

Meanwhile, as he had predicted, the tempest raged higher and higher; the oarsmen were powerless. But the galley drifted nearer and nearer the home port. At last, just as a great wave dashed against the galley and over it breaking it to bits, they were brought so near to land that they could swim ashore. One young and vigorous oarsman took charge of the Conde Dirlos, who was rendered more unfit for the feat by dismay at the ill-success of his mission than by the weakness of

his age. But none looked after Turian for he was known to be the best and swiftest swimmer of all the country.

It was not until the hull had keeled over and gone down that they remembered they had bound him hand and foot, and thus he could not save himself. And so, he, who was the cause of all, alone was lost.

THE GIFT OF FISHES

ONCE upon a time there was a fisherman named Pedro. He was very good and very poor. He never went out to fish without kneeling down and asking a blessing on his labors. He never lost time in drinking-bouts, and brought up his children to be as honest and industrious as himself. Yet nothing prospered with him.

He toiled the livelong day, and often far into the night, yet he could scarcely earn enough to keep his family from want. If ever there was a storm, it was sure to be Pedro's boat that was swamped. And if ever a rich shoal of fish came within his ordinary fishing-ground, it would be sure to happen when he was ill, or his gear was out of order, or when, for some reason, he could not avail himself of the blessing.

Most remarkable of all was the fact, that under all this misfortune, Pedro was always cheerful. As the beautiful Spanish proverb says, he was like the sandal-wood, perfuming the axe which strikes it low. He not only never complained, and continued at his toil steadily day by day, but he was always praising God for what he had given him—his wife, his children, his humble hut, his strong arms.

"Put your trust in God and your feet diligently along the road." So he used to say and so he used to act.

One day he had gone out as usual, and as so often happened, had taken no fish. It was no use going back with an empty bag. He persevered another day, and another, though he had nothing but a loaf to live on. The sun blazed above in a molten sky, the sea below like a lake of fire. Pedro crept under the shadow of his sails, and was so exhausted with the heat and hunger, that he swooned. Then he had a vision.

He saw himself lying at the bottom of his boat, but not alone. There was one lying there also, who slept too. His raiment glistened, and a light of glory surrounded Him, which paled that of the fiery sun. By and by the sun went down, and it seemed that night came on, but He was still there. The wind rose, and

Pedro's little boat was tossed and buffeted, until he cried out with alarm. Then he thought, "While He is here, no harm can come. I will keep His slumber sacred."

So he looked out on the fury of the storm and waited. Then that shining One rose and waved His hands abroad towards the winds, and there came a sweet melody from His mouth, which said, "Peace! Peace!" Suddenly all was still and bright again, and the soft breeze echoed the music of "Peace! Peace!"

Then Pedro, when he saw what He had done, fell on his knees before Him and said:

"Lord, as Thou hast done this, send me now a draft of fishes that my net may be full."

Then the Bright One stretched out His hands over the sea; and there rose out of the rippling waves great, handsome fishes such as Pedro had never seen before. They were of the height of a man in length, and their skin shone like silver interwoven with many colors, and their fins like gold. Docile at His gesture, they rose gently over the side of the boat and laid them down obedient at His feet. One by one, on they came, till the boat began to sink under their great weight.

For one moment Pedro's heart fainted within him at

seeing the rich prize sink away again just as it was within grasp, and with it his boat, his tackle, all that he had to call his own! But his eye rested on the Bright One who stood there and his faith and confidence returned. He observed that some folds of His gleaming mantle, as it hung loosely from His shoulders, floated on the waves which were now meeting over the place where he stood. Confident that it would bear him up Pedro stepped on it, as onto dry land, while all his earthly treasures sank out of sight.

When Pedro woke the sun had nearly set. A light breeze was gently carrying off the heat of the day, but his bark was empty. No Bright One sat in it, no beautiful fish lay there. Listlessly Pedro looked over the side of his boat. The influence of his dream was yet upon him, and he could not restrain a look after his sunken prize. What was that? Something large and shining swam under his boat! Hastily Pedro detached a little lamp which always burned under a cross hung on the mast, and looked down into the clear blue waters. Lo! attracted by the light, the shining fish turned their small bright eyes towards it, as if they took it for the rising sun, and swam straight towards it almost within arm's length.

Pedro was now at no loss what to do. Taking a large hook which lay in the bottom of the boat he lashed it firmly to a long spar, and then hanging the lamp over the side of his boat, he prepared to seize the finny prize with his improvised harpoon. The lamp attracted them as before and now came the struggle. Pedro was a small man, and the first fish he tackled was a foot taller than himself and well-nigh pulled him over the side of the boat. Pedro was glad enough to let him go, even at the cost of his weapon, which the fish carried down into the deep with him. As you know by now, Pedro was one who never lost heart. He pulled out his *narvaja,* a long-bladed knife with a cross-hilt, and tied it to another long piece of wood.

He was gaining experience, this time he selected a smaller antagonist and great was his joy when, after a brief struggle, he landed the fish safely in the bottom of the boat. Pedro was not avaricious. More anxious to share the good news with his family than to obtain a large haul, he only waited to take one moderate-sized fish more, and then he was off to his home.

Great was the joy in the village next morning, as the news of the new source of industry spread. Some were frightened and said there must be witchcraft in

it. But when they saw the trade prosper they were glad enough to take it as the good gift of God, and from that time to this the tunny fishery has never failed to enrich the dwellers on all the shores of the Mediterranean.

BALLADS AND BOOTS

THERE was once a minstrel who travelled about the country singing sweet songs which people flocked to hear. His music was not like the music of the Spanish people, for he came from the kingdom of Provence, and every one thronged to hear the strange sweet melody. And when he had passed on, and there was no one left to sing as he sang, people tried to remember his words and his tones, and to sing like him.

At one of the towns there was a boot-maker, who, as he sat all day alone at his last, diverted himself with singing; and as he had sung a good deal, he thought he could sing very well. He was delighted with the minstrel's songs, caught up a good many of them and never tired of singing them, after his fashion. But from be-

ing quite ignorant both of music and the Provençal language, he made, as we would say, a great mess of it. Yet, as the people knew no more about it than himself, they were very well pleased to listen to him.

So, when a long time after, the Provençal minstrel came back that way, they would not admit him, but cried out:

"We have one of our own people who sings your songs for us as well as you, we need no Frenchman here!"

Now the minstrel was greatly devoted to his art, he did not sing merely for sordid gain, so instead of being angry because he was supplanted, he was really pleased to hear that the people in that far-off town had learned the language and melody of his dear Provence; and he said that he would hear the boot-maker himself.

Imagine how great was his annoyance and mortification, when he heard the beautiful ballads spoiled by the rude unlearned attempts of the boot-maker!

"Is it possible," he said, "that this man has been deluding these people into the idea that what he sings is like my songs. How can I prevent his going on keeping them under this error?"

Then he bethought him what to do. He went by

night to the boot-maker's workshop, and mixing up pieces of leather he sewed them up into all sorts of foolish, useless shapes.

When daylight returned and the boot-maker came to his work, he was in a great fury at what was done, and began shouting to the neighbors to come and avenge him, for the Frenchman had spoiled all his work. Then they all came running helter-skelter to exercise summary justice on the minstrel.

But the minstrel stood up and confronted them, and said:

"Good people, first hear me! This man is a maker of boots and I am a maker of ballads. True I have spoiled his boots, I do not deny it; but he first spoiled my ballads. What I have done is but fair. If you will hear us sing, one after the other, you will yourselves give judgment in my favor."

So the people told the boot-maker to stand up and sing, which he did in his clumsy, droning way, with false notes and many mispronunciations. After him the minstrel stood up and warbled his song in tones so soft and sweet, that the people wondered how they could ever have listened to the other. And with one voice they cried out:

"The minstrel is right! The minstrel is right!"

Then the minstrel, who bore no malice, and had acted only out of love for his art, repaid the boot-maker amply for all the damage to his leather, but took a promise of him that he would never sing his songs again.

THE BLACK CHARGER

HERNANDO was a poor knight, who had spent his all in in the service of his country. He had nothing to call his own but his stout armor, his fiery, black charger, and his strong lance. With these he was in the thickest of the fray against the Moors. But at last his luck failed and the Moors contrived to surround and slay him.

Now, when his faithful, black charger knew that his master was wounded to death, like the valiant steed of a brave master, it turned and bore Don Hernando out of the fight to a lonely dell where a hermit might minister to his last hours.

A sordid Moor, seeing the helpless, dying man thus borne along, determined to possess himself of Don

Hernando's armor and his bold, black steed. He followed but his attempts to arrest them were fruitless until the gallant animal pleased to stop before the hermit's cell. It waited patiently while they lifted his master down—the hermit and the Moor together. When the dying breath had left his body, the Moor stripped him of his armor and packed it carefully on the back of the charger, and as he was afraid to mount him, prepared to lead him home.

But the black charger no sooner saw his dead master safely in the care of the hermit and the armor safe in his own, than he dashed off at his greatest speed, leaving the Moor who had dared lay hands on his reins, to measure his length in the dust. On and on he fled, nor stopped till he reached Hernando's hillside home.

Doña Teresa, his wife, had never ceased to look out for Hernando's return. When she saw the black charger, she knew at once what had happened. Then she took the precious armor and laid it safely away, and caressed the faithful steed and led him to a comfortable stall.

Then every day she tried the armor on her son, named Hernando too, and made him mount the great charger, and perform feats of strength, that he might

be valiant against the Moors like his father. But young Hernando was slight and very pale. He shrank from the cold, hard armor, and the tall, snorting steed. But his mother was brave as became the wife of a valiant knight and would not listen to his fears. She bade him be of good heart and inspired him with her courage.

At last a day came when she sent him forth to battle against the Moors. Young Hernando's heart beat high for his spirit was indeed willing and he burned to add his name to the brave traditions of prowess and valor which his mother had told him of his house. His arm was untried and he shrank from the thought of pain, for the young flesh was weak, but he could not belie his mother so he mounted the bold, black charger.

The noble steed snorted, when he felt that once more he carried a Christian to give battle to the Moors. By night they travelled and slept by day in the shade. In the morning, when the sun rose, they set out on their way.

As they crossed a plain, young Hernando saw a tall Moor coming towards them. And his heart smote him for fear and he would gladly have turned out of the way. Then he bethought him that it became not a

Christian to shrink away before a Moor. So he summoned all his courage and rode steadily on his way.

Now, when the wind brought to the bold black charger the scent of the Moor, he reared and snorted, and shook his mane, and dashed forward to the encounter. So young Hernando was borne along, and found himself face to face with his foe.

Then his father's shield rose to protect him and the lance lifted up his arm. Straight rode the black charger at the Moor and the lance cast him from his seat. Then the sword leaped from the scabbard, and fixing itself in young Hernando's grasp, struck off the pagan's head.

Hernando tied the head to his saddle and bound the body upon the Moor's mule. Thus he rode on to the royal town of Burgos. And when the people saw him bestriding the bold, black charger, and the headless body following behind, fast bound to the African mule, they cried:

"All hail to the victor! All hail to young Hernando, who conquered the pagan Moor!"

And so they brought him to the King, with the headless rider behind. Then the King rose and embraced

him and the Queen gave him her fair, white hand to kiss, and she said:

"A youth so comely and valiant should have armor rich and bright, and a steed with a shining coat."

Then she called a page to bring a suit of polished steel and a splendid horse from the royal stables and presented them to young Hernando. They took off his worn armor and laid it on the back of the old, black charger. And Hernando donned the new, bright suit and mounted the royal horse.

The bold, black charger was grieved to be thus set aside, so he snorted, and turning his head, rode back to Doña Teresa. When she saw him ride back with the empty armor, she thought that her son had been killed by the Moors, and weeping laid by the armor, caressed the faithful horse and led him to his comfortable stall.

Now, young Hernando was afraid as he sat on the fiery steed the Queen had given him. He was used to the faithful, black charger that had been his father's, but this gift of the Queen was untried. Nor had he learned to handle the new weapons they gave him. But the King, who had seen him come in from successful combat, took him for a practical warrior and gave

him such work as needed a valiant heart, and sent him to guard the road.

"Now keep this pass," he said, "for the rocks are narrow and high, and one at a time, as the enemy comes, with your sword you will strike them down."

Young Hernando would not say "Nay," for the spirit within him was bold, though his flesh was weak and shrank. Then as he watched alone, with only the moon for a guide, he cried:

"Oh, had I only my old, black steed, and my father's tried and trusty armor!"

Then the bold, black charger knew, as he stood in his far-off stall, that his master's son was in danger, and he snorted and reared and tugged to get away. Doña Teresa knew when she heard him that there was need for him far away. So she bound the armor on him, and away he fled like the wind, nor stopped till he reached Hernando.

"To me! My faithful, black steed! To me, 'tis yet in time! To me!" And he clad himself in his father's armor and mounted the bold charger.

Stealthily came the Moors, creeping one by one through the pass, and were laid low on the ground that night by Hernando's lance and Hernando's sword.

"This Lone Rider is No Mortal Man"

And when the King came the next morning, Hernando was at his post, and his foes prostrate around him. When the King saw how bravely he had acquitted himself, he would have given him another suit of armor and a new bright-coated steed. But Hernando said:

"Good King! Pray leave me my father's armor and my father's faithful and bold charger. I am but a stripling, my hand and arm are weak, for my father's arms and my father's steed alone put the foe to flight."

So the King let him have his will, and found him so brave and successful against the Moors that he sent him to carry a message of encouragement to Don Diaz, to whom the Moors had laid siege.

Now, as he came back from his errand, he was crossing a lonely plain, when suddenly it was covered with horsemen—Moorish horsemen, arrayed in all their might. He knew that his trust was sacred; that he must not endanger the letter he bore by encountering so overpowering a host.

But it was in vain that he tried to turn, for the bold black charger refused. But, as if he had been cruelly spurred, dashed with all his might right into the Pagan midst. The lance sprang into Hernando's hand and

pierced through the Moorish King. Then the host, dismayed, cried out:

"This one rider, alone in his strength, is no mortal man. He is one of the Christian saints come down to scatter the Prophet's band."

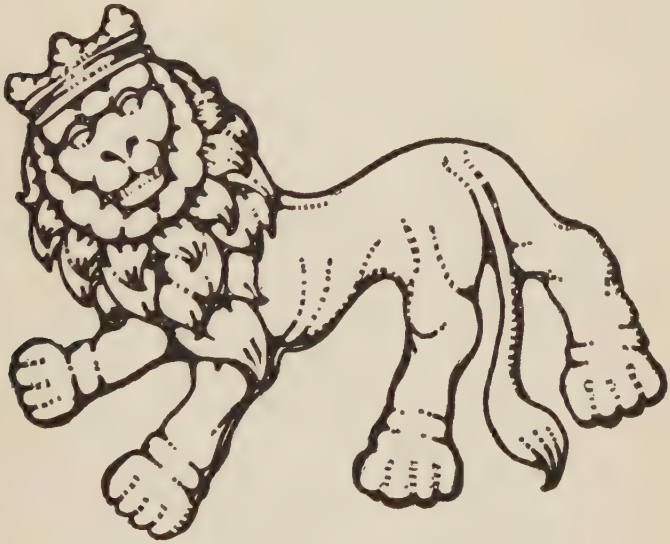
So they turned and fled, but the black charger followed close behind, and Hernando's lance and Hernando's sword laid low the straggling host.

And such fear had fallen on all the Prophet's children that day, that on bended knees they sued for truce. And to purchase a term of rest, they set free all their captives, and with tribute and with hostages made peace with the Christian King.

So young Hernando rode home—to his home on the steep hillside. And Doña Teresa came out to greet her gallant son and his brave steed. And with her, walked fair Melisenda, who gave him gentle greeting. She was his betrothed bride and, now that peace was made, they would live in love and happiness in their hillside home.

They stroked the bold black charger and led him to his freshly littered stall. And it is said that while the land held the blight of one pagan Moor, that bold black

charger lived, and wherever the fight raged high, or the Christian host needed aid, there he bore his master to turn the day. But where he died or when he fell, no one ever knew.



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